

Carl Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus 1918

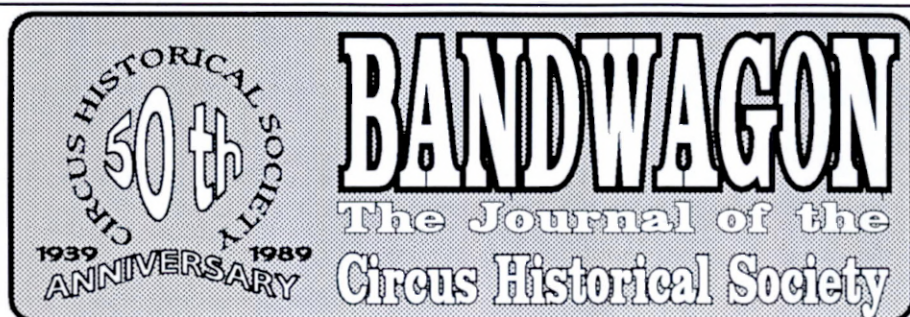
BANDWAGON

The Journal of the Circus Historical Society

May-June 1989

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THIS MONTH'S COVER

This unusual lithograph was used by the Sells-Floto Circus in 1911. It was printed by the Russell-Morgan Co. The Floto show used a number of litho designs from Russell-Morgan that season. All are very rare today. The original is in the Pfening Archives.

Bert Morphy appeared in the center ring as display No. 7. The program stated: "the Man Who Sings to Beat the Band, It's grand opera in the circus--but popular songs are sung--Sells-Floto full band plays 40 and Morphy sings louder, away louder than the band can play. A marvelous exhibition of voice culture."

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1989 CONVENTION FINAL UPDATE

Inserted in this issue is a registration card for the Circus Historical Society's Golden Anniversary Convention at Columbus, Ohio from July 27 through July 30 with an informal kick off on the evening of July 26. Advance registration is \$45.00 per member and \$40.00 for each additional non-member accompanying a CHS member. Registrations received after July 11 will be \$50.00 for members and \$45.00 for guests. Payment covers admission to all events including the Circus Vargas performance, banquet, historical papers and presentations, sessions with Vargas personnel, movies,

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BANDWAGON BACK ISSUES
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the Pfening Archives presentation and the circusiana auction. Your convention committee has arranged an excellent program of events, nicely balancing yesterday's circus with today's with ample time to sight-see or jackpot in between. It promises to be one of our best gatherings ever.

Also enclosed is an advance reservation request for the Holiday Inn at Ohio Center, our convention headquarters. The special rates to CHS members are \$52 for single rooms and \$55 for doubles. This card should be sent directly to the hotel before July 11. The Holiday Inn at Ohio Center is directly across the street from the arena where Circus Vargas will appear.

Please return both the convention registration and hotel reservation cards as quickly as possible as banquet space is somewhat limited.

Attendees are encouraged to bring material for the auction. This always popular event is of great benefit to the organization as its proceeds go entirely toward defraying costs of publishing the *Bandwagon*. Last year it raised over \$4000 and offered collectors the opportunity to buy many fine items. It will be more of the same this year as we have already received many contributions. Those bringing material to the auction should contact Fred Pfening III at the meeting, or send it to him beforehand at

2315 Haverford Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43220 as soon as possible.

TENTATIVE CONVENTION SCHEDULE

Wednesday, July 26: Evening: Movies.
Thursday, July 27: Morning: Registration.

Afternoon: Historical Papers
Richard J. Reynolds: "Hold Your Horses, Here Come the Elephants"
Eva Amidon: "Father Ed Sullivan"
Richard Flint: "Currier & Ives Prints of Barnum's Museum"

Evening: Showing of Rare Circus Posters and other circusiana from the Pfening Archives followed by movies.

Friday, July 28: Morning: Presentation by Bill and Barbara Woodcock on elephants

Historical Paper. Stuart Thayer: "Early Menageries"

Afternoon: Tour of Circus Vargas arena by Mike Gorman, advance logistics representative for show.

Evening: Circusiana Auction.

Saturday, July 29: Morning: Historical Paper John Polacsek: "Marketing Buffalo Bill's Wild West"

Talk by Ms. Dione Arata, Circus Vargas choreographer.

Afternoon: Circus Vargas performance. CHS to have special seats.

Evening: Banquet. Clifford E. Vargas featured speaker.

Sunday, July 30: Morning: Talk by personnel from Circus Vargas.

MAIL DUES PAYMENT AT ONCE

Your dues or subscription payment must be received by July 15 or you will be removed from the mailing list and the July-August *Bandwagon* will not be sent to you. Don't miss a single issue send your payment at once.



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Bandwagon

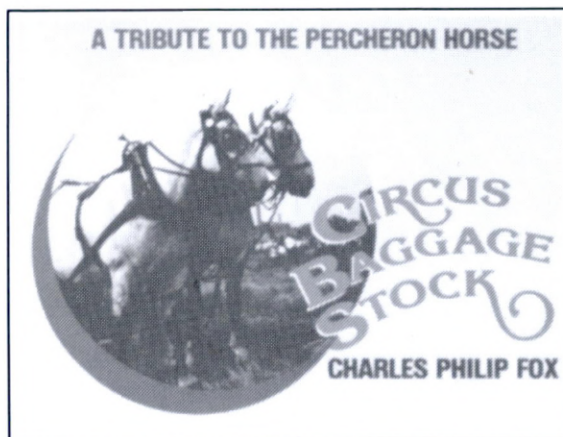
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CARL HAGENBECK-WALLACE CIRCUS

Season of 1918

By Gordon M. Carver

The season of 1918 was the last year of the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus as a big show with the emphasis on "big." After that season the six pole big top with three rings, two stages and hippodrome track plus the many other tents that had been carried on as many as forty-nine cars were no more. While from 1919 on it was a large show only once more was it the equal of the 1918 show and that was in 1934.

The 1918 Hagenbeck-Wallace train consisted of forty-nine cars, one less than had been used in 1917. These cars were all of wooden construction. There were twenty-five 60 foot flats equipped with steel truss rods. The flats carried 105 wagons. The stocks were twelve in number with the same wood and truss rod construction. In addition there was one storage car. Nine sleeping cars were used including the owner's private car. Two advertising cars were used. The train usually was transported in three sections, although there were a few occasions when it moved in four sections in very hilly country.

The show received national publicity with an article appearing in the February 9, 1918 issue of *Scientific American*. The story told of the canvas wagons designed and built by William H. Curtis. The article read: "Keeping a circus on time--hauling the tents down and making the jump to the next town in less than twelve hours--is no small amount of work, especially if the night be rainy and the next show town a long distance away. An

A Hagenbeck-Wallace spool wagon unloading the big top during the 1918 season. Pfening Archives.

invention that is calculated to save from one to six hours of work every night is a revolving tent wagon, built by W. H. Curtis of West Baden, Indiana. Two circus companies have used the invention this past summer, and so successful have the results been that several others are having machines built this winter.

"The usual method of hauling circus tents is to fold them up into bales, load them on wagons for the night, and in the morning unroll them again. By the new method they are wound on huge spools each evening and the next morning simply unwound from the reels again. The tent-winding machine consists simply of this spool, 25 feet long mounted on a wagon. The spool is turned by means of a gasoline engine mounted at the back of the truck.

"Circus tents are made in 50-foot sections and so it is only necessary to fold them over once to put them on the spool. The tent section is fastened to the spool, the engine started, and it is quickly wound up. The next section is attached to the first and then wound up the same way. This is repeated until seven tons of tents have been placed on

the reel. One or more tent wagons are used, depending upon the number of tents. When all of the tents have been taken care of, the wagons are placed on the train and taken to the next town.

"An interesting feature of the apparatus is the fact that the spool is provided with wringers, so that on rainy nights the water may be squeezed out of the canvas. Another advantageous feature is the fact that the tents are said to last nearly twice as long when handled on the spools."



Baggage stock waiting to pull Hagenbeck-Wallace wagons from the runs to the lot in 1918. Pfening Archives.

Curtis had built the original canvas spool wagon for the Sells-Floto Circus in 1910 while superintendent of that show. Curtis came to the Hagenbeck show in 1917 where he built three canvas spool wagons that spring. The Hagenbeck spool wagons remained in use through the 1923 season.

By early March the West Baden, Indiana winter quarters was beginning to assemble acts for the performance. The show was looking for iron jaw acts. For the side show they wanted a colored band with minstrels, other musical acts and midgets plus any other first class side show acts. These types of advertisements continued to appear in the *Billboard* through early April. One ad spelled out the needs of the band in detail--"two monster Eb basses, BBb base, solo clarinet. Eb clarinet, 1st and 2nd cornets (not trumpets), 1st alto and a steam calliope player." [Although there is no record of the show having a steam calliope.] Any other musicians could apply by writing with name,



age and experience to J. E. Betz, bandmaster, at Red Cloud, Nebraska.

In addition to the earlier ad for side show help a later ad spelled out a much wider list of persons wanted. Now George Connor, side show manager, at Chillicothe, Ohio, was asking for high class freaks of all kinds to feature, such as curios of every description--midgets, giants, odd and strange people. Connor also was interested in a comedy juggler, bag puncher, any kind of novelty acts, as well as oriental dancing ladies and oriental musicians. Beyond this they would hire anything and everything of a high class nature that would interest the show going public. It would appear that at this late date, only a couple of weeks before the opening, the side show was far from fully staffed.

Fred Gollmar, of the original Gollmar brothers, had been hired as railroad contractor. It was also announced that the show was to go East for the first time and that the railroad contracts for the trip were mostly set. The New York Central contracts through New York state were signed and those with the New Haven and Hartford were almost completed to carry the show through New England. Edward Arlington had planned that route and would direct the campaign through that part of the country. This trip into New England would be in direct opposition to the Barnum & Bailey show.

In the April 20 *Billboard* the show advertised for first class billposters for the cars and bannermen for Bert Wheeler's brigade. This was two weeks after the advance crews started and was typical of wartime labor shortages. The men were to get a fifty cent meal allowance. The advance car #1 under J. W. Nedrow was in Pittsburgh. Howard King was the press agent on that car which also carried a program solicitor, boss billposter and fourteen billposters.

Hagenbeck-Wallace, sometimes referred to as the Carl Hagenbeck Circus, opened in Cincinnati, Ohio on April 26 for a two day stand playing on two different lots, Cumminsville on the 26th and Norwood on the 27th. Heavy rains in the week before left both lots very muddy. However, the bad conditions underfoot did not hinder the show

in any appreciable way, nor apparently the crowds. The Friday matinee in Cumminsville had the big top two thirds full while the evening was practically a full house.

In Norwood because of inexperienced work crews and the wet lot, the afternoon show was late starting but still had a good crowd. In the evening the tent was packed.

Springfield, Worcester and Brockton in Massachusetts; Danbury, Bridgeport, New Haven, New London and Norwich in Connecticut; Newport, Woonsocket and Pawtucket in Rhode Island and Brattleboro, White River Junction, Burlington and Rutland in Vermont were played. The show did not go into New Hampshire or Maine.

The New England tour was uniformly good for business. It was said that a good cookhouse kept workmen on the show and that meant that it had no problem retaining help. However only two weeks after this note appeared in the *Billboard* there was an ad for performers, but more importantly for "workmen, a train poler and chalkers" as more men were being called into military service.

One employee was killed by a train in the freight yards at Pawtucket, Rhode Island and another was left behind after being arrested for waving a gun while drunk. Only two other problems occurred through mid-June. Due to the late arrival in Amsterdam, New York only one show was given. At Norwich, Connecticut the lot was unusually far out but good street car service got the crowds to the show.

The performance showed the affects of World War One in that while all three rings and two stages in the six pole big top were filled for the most part the running time appeared to be a bit on the short side, there being only sixteen numbers instead of the former nineteen or twenty. The program at the opening was as follows:

Display 1. Quartette sang, followed by the usual walkaround "tournament." Hagenbeck-Wallace during these years had not put much effort into its openings. The show never had "theme" spectacles such as those presented by the Barnum and Ringling shows.

Display 2. Emil Schwyer presented five lions in the center ring steel arena. Living statues acts in white and bronze were presented in the end rings.

Display 3. Bareback riding in the end rings by Charles Rooney and Reno McCree, top notch riders. Miss Jewel presented a lion riding a horse in the arena. Clowns entertained on the track.

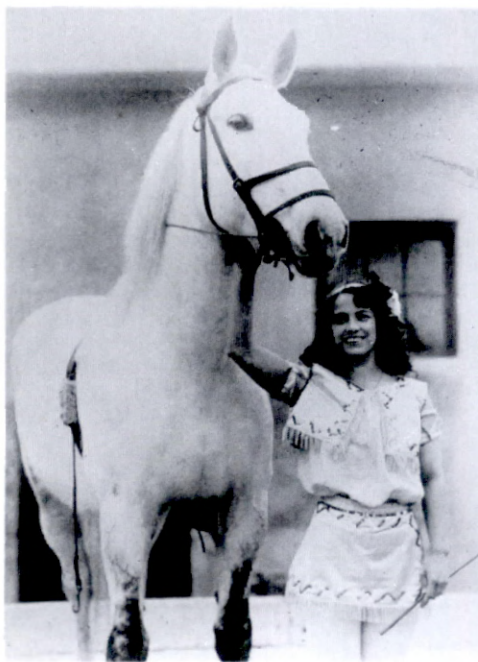
Display 4. This was a large aerial number. Eddie Ward and sister in a double trapeze,

<h1 style="text-align: center;">HAGENBECK-WALLACE</h1> <p style="text-align: center;">CHAS. A. GOLLMAR, Manager. ED. BALLARD, Owner BUD GORMAN, Eq. Director</p>			
 <h2 style="text-align: center;">LA MONT TRIO</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">ARTISTIC BOOMERANG MANIPULATORS, FEATURING NAIDA LA MONT RUNNING THE ENDLESS WIRE NINE FEET IN MIDAIR</p>			
<h2 style="text-align: center;">MILLE. JEWEL</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">A New Act and a Real Circus Feature, including the Most Wonderful Riding Tiger and Trick Elephant.</p>			
<h2 style="text-align: center;">DIERICKX BROS.</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">ATHLETES PAR EXCELLENCE 8TH SUCCESSFUL SEASON H. & W. SHOW</p>		 <h2 style="text-align: center;">Harry H. Ingalls</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">CONCESSION PRIVILEGES H. & W. SHOW, SEASON 1918 Permanent Address, 7 Howard St., SALEM, MASS.</p>	
 <h2 style="text-align: center;">KENNETH R. WAITE</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">INTERNATIONAL CLOWN WHO HAS MADE MILLIONS LAUGH</p>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">LE ROY TROUPE</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">SENSATIONAL IRON JAW AND TIGHT WIRE ACT, 5 LADIES, 1 MAN</p>	
<h2 style="text-align: center;">BABY VIOLA</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">WEIGHT 612 LBS. 2nd Season HAGENBECK & WALLACE</p>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">MAY-JOE</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">The Double-Bodied, 3-Legged Child The World's Greatest Living Curiosity. Feature Pit and Side Show Attraction. HARRY CARRIER, Manager, Cincinnati, Ohio. Address: Billboard, Cincinnati, Ohio.</p>	
 <h2 style="text-align: center;">KING C. ROY</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">The Only Genuine ALBINO on Exhibition Today. Permanent Address, JAMESTOWN, PA.</p>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">EMIL SCHWYER</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Animal Trainer 8TH SEASON H. & W.</p>	
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Gene R. Milton</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Pit Show Manager Hagenbeck & Wallace, Season 1918</p>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Henry Guenther</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Tattooed Wonder 1918, H. & W. SHOW Permanent Address, BILLBOARD, CINCINNATI, OHIO</p>	
 <h2 style="text-align: center;">PRINCESS LORENA</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">DOLL LADY The Perfect Midget AGE, 18 YEARS Permanent Address, 315 Beaver St., NORTH LANSING, MICHIGAN.</p>			

This full page ad listing Hagenbeck-Wallace personnel appeared in the June 15, 1918 *Billboard*. Pfening Archives.

This was Cincinnati's first circus of the season. The parade was given on the 26th in Cumminsville and into downtown Cincinnati. It drew favorable comments.

After the opening the show moved to Columbus followed by four dates each in Ohio and Pennsylvania at Newark, Urichville, Steubenville and Canton and Washington, New Brighton, Sharon and Erie in western Pennsylvania. The circus entered New York at Buffalo and played Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Albany and Poughkeepsie. New England stands followed where the show played most of the principal cities except Boston.



Rosa Rosalind was a featured principal rider in the 1918 Hagenbeck big show. Pfening Archives

the LeRoy Sisters on Roman rings, Willie Ward in a cloud swing, Arthur LaFleur, Miss Benie, Mayme Ward, Miss White, Nellie Ward, Muriel Ward all did outstanding aerial work. The clowns appeared on stage two.

Display 5. Performing elephants in the end rings worked by Misses McDhu and Donovan. Miss Jewell presented a tiger riding elephant, directed by Emil Schwyer.

Display 6. Ring one Dainty Little Ora LeRoy hand balancing. Ring two Miss Enos on a rolling globe. Stage two contortion and hand balancing on pedestals by the Luster Bros. Ring three boomerang and hat manipulation by the Lamonts, two women and a man.

Display 7. Clown band on stage two, Art Adair leader, with Lon Moore, Phil King, Bert Leo, Harry LaPearl, Tom Sanger, Ernest Girard, Dock Stoddard, Kenneth Waite and Frank Stout.

Display 8. A mixed number of horses and acrobats. Ring one Miss Cottrell manage act. Stage one Derickx Bros. high perch pole act. Stage two Gene and Mary Enos perch pole and head to head equilibristic feats. Ring three a trotting horse and pony presented by Miss Powell.

Display 9. An unusual combination act with four iron jaw acts over the two end rings and stages and the big flying return act over the center ring. The iron jaw performers were the McDhu Sisters; the Gothards and the LeRoy troupe. Arthur LaFleur did an aerial spinning act. The Flying Wards, four men and two women presented their famous trapeze act.

Display 10. Three principal lady equestriennes in bareback acts of outstanding grace and agility. In ring one Miss Hodgini. Center ring Rosa Rosalind presenting a somersault from one horse to another. Ring three Miss Rooney.

Display 11. Low wire acts in three rings and on two stages. The Avalon Troupe; the Gothards; Lamont Trio, two girls and a man; Arthur LaFleur, slack wire; LeRoy Troupe of four women and a man. Over the center ring a Chinese man hung by his hair from a rope going through various maneuvers.

Display 12. Riding acts. Ring one Misses Rooney, Dean and Bonnie high school riding. Center ring Miss Masantello concluding with a high jumping horse on the hippodrome track. Ring three high school riding by Virgil Barnett and the Misses McDhu and Rooney. The number was concluded by Hills high hurdle jumping horses and Miss Gladys Gorman driving a fine horse and buggy.

Display 13. Ring one Damon Troupe risley act. Stage one Chong Ya Troupe acrobats diving through knives. Center ring twelve Arabs acrobatic feats and tumbling. Stage two Deirckx Bros. with feats of strength with dumbbells and weights. Ring three the Avalon Troupe acrobatic act.

Display 14. Big bareback number with three outstanding groups of riders. Ring one the Rooneys, a man and two women in combination jockey and riding act. Center ring the Cottrell-Powell troupe, carrying act. Ring three the McCrees combination jockey act.

Display 15. Comedy acts. Ring one the Three Lamonts. Stage one Herman Lenzen. Ring two boxing kangaroo and clowns. Stage two Damons with dog. Ring three George Donahue.

Display 16. Races. Steeple Chase by Hill and Company. Jockey act by Virgil, Batty and Smith. Roman riding by Dean and Stout. Liberty race by horse Boxer, ridden by Virgil Barnett.

The final number had been curtailed from prior years as no chariot races were given.

William E (Bud) Gorman was equestrian director and Bert Cole was the announcer.

By June 10th the show was back in Ohio at Conneaut after playing five more northern New York towns. Lorain, Fostoria and Toledo followed. The circus then played two days in Detroit.

The next week opened in Pontiac, Michigan followed by Port Huron, Ann Arbor and Dowagiac and Michigan City, Indiana.

Early on June 22 as the second section of the show train, consisting of 4 stock cars, 14 flats and 4 sleepers, on its way to Hammond, was stopped just outside of the Gary, Indiana yards, in East Ivanhoe because of a hot box. An empty Michigan Central troop train also enroute toward Hammond from Michigan City collided with the five rear cars, four

sleepers and the caboose of the circus train around 3 am on June 22. These five cars were split down the middle. The no. 5 sleeper carried performers, cars no. 15 and 16 carried mostly women and car no. 17 carried candy butchers, canvassmen, ticket sellers, train crew and baggage stock men.

Wagons on some of the flats were thrown off the train. It appears that these were not seriously damaged and after repair were reloaded.

There were about four hundred people aboard the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus cars. Early reports indicated that almost all of the four hundred were injured or dead with the dead estimated to be thirty to one hundred and twenty-five. By June 23 sixty-two bodies had been found, but only twenty-four had been identified. The final count listed about sixty dead with as many as fifty more missing and about one hundred fifty injured of which sixty-one were serious enough to require hospitalization. About sixty people were burned in the wreckage and were never found. This was the worst circus train wreck of all time from the standpoint of loss of life.

The collision resulted from the engineer of the troop train apparently falling asleep. The flagman of the circus train stated in the hearing held afterwards that the train ignored his signal to stop as well as a railroad semaphore signal that was set at stop. The fireman testified that he saw a red flare on the track as he shoveled coal and two minutes later the engine hit the circus cars. The conductor and head brakeman of the circus train also testified that the engineer ignored all warnings which were all plainly visible. However, because all trains were operated

Millie and Charlie Rooney on the Hagenbeck show in 1918. Pfening Archives.



by the Federal government due to the war and because the Federal government could not be sued no damages could be recovered by the show. But many claims were made by various persons for damages against the show.

Ed Ballard who usually was on the show had gone into Chicago from Michigan City to finalize the purchase of new canvas from the U. S. Tent and Awning Co. The June 22 *Billboard* reported that new canvas was finished and ready for delivery to the show in Hammond, Indiana. By pure chance Ballard escaped the wreck.

The show was devastated by the loss of personnel. The July 6 *Billboard* listed the dead. Performers lost were Arthur Derickx; Jennie Ward Todd; Millie Jewell; Mary Rodrick and Jennie Barnett, known as the McDhu Sisters; Louise Cottrell; Bessie Cattannach; Mrs. Joe Coyle; James and Verna Connors; Virgil Barnett and clowns Eddie Devoe and Jimmy Ward. In addition a number of departments were riddled including 13 killed from the train crew, 1 from the cookhouse, 27 from the baggage stock crew, 5 from the canvas crew and 5 from the light department.

The article also reported that trapeze performers Alex Todd and Eddie Ward, and clown Joe Coyle had left the show after losing members of their family in the wreck.

An article datelined Chicago July 3, appeared in papers throughout the country. The head line read: "Claims as result of wreck are settled by circus owner." The article read: "E. M. Ballard, owner of the Hagenbeck-Wallace show, settled in full all claims of the heirs of those who were killed in the recent wreck near Gary, and with the injured.

"Settlement was made in addition to the payment of all funeral expenses and all hospital and expenses of those injured.

"It cost Ballard a million dollars to settle the claims. The law of the state of Illinois provides that the heirs of those killed in railroad wrecks or accidents are to be paid

Some of the Victims of the Wreck of the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus Train Near Gary, Ind.



These performers of the Carl Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus lost their lives in the 1918 wreck. Pfening Archives.

\$5,000 as compensation, without recourse to law.

"As the dead numbered about 60, the settlement of these claims alone amounted to \$300,000. In addition there were about 100 personal injury cases.

"Tom Johnson, a Chicago theatrical attorney, had lined up and was preparing to prosecute a hundred or more cases, when Ballard announced his intention to pay claims. The circus man did everything else he could to allay the suffering of the injured. In most cases the injured are being paid their salaries as if they were working.

"Ballard is reputed to be worth \$20,000,000. Yet his action in promptly paying all claims has excited a great deal of admiration.

"Notwithstanding the terrible loss of life the Hagenbeck-Wallace circus wreck, Ed Ballard, owner of the show, decided not to call the season off and arranged to take up the route following the cancellation of a few stands.

"Ballard received offers from other circus interests, the Barnum & Bailey and Ringling shows turning over a number of circus acts to help complete the H-W roster which Ballard

was able to put together in Chicago. Charles Gollmar, who had a narrow escape from the wreck, continues as general manager for the Ballard interests.

"It is believed by circus men in the east that Ballard will dispose of the name and circus equipment before the end of the summer."

Two days were required to search and clear the wreckage of the burned out sleepers. The show missed only two stands in Hammond, Indiana and Monroe, Wisconsin. Sleeping cars were obtained from the railroad to replace those that had been demolished.

An extensive history of the Hagenbeck-Wallace wreck is documented in *No Performances Today*, by Warren A. Reeder, Jr., published in 1972 by the Hammond Historical Society.

The contracted route was picked up at Beloit, Wisconsin on June 25. A regular Hagenbeck newspaper ad appeared in the *Beloit Daily News* on June 24 with the following copy added at the top of the ad: "Complete, Intact, Unchanged, Undiminished in thrilling Splendor and Magnitude of Parade, Performance, Pride and Pharaphernalia." The press department had gone to work to counter any public concern that the show would not live up to its reputation.

But the presentation of a revised performance, substituting for acts that were lost in the wreck, was a challenge. Fred Ledgett who was property boss, came out of retirement and performed in a riding act, substituting for a regular rider who was recovering from injuries in a hospital. The Avalons worked aerial turns replacing the McDhu Sisters. Another lady replaced Millie Jewell in the wild animal acts. Other acts did extra turns they had not performed in years. Some performers appeared in the performance wearing bandages. Others with broken legs and arms stood in the big top watching the first show following the tragedy. It was clear that the show had to go on. Keen eyed members of the audience were aware of the prob-

Two men at right carrying a body from the wreck of the show in Ivanhoe, Indiana. Pfening Archives.





The Great Derickx Brothers, Arthur Derickx, left, and Eddie Nittsbury, right, were lost in the wreck. Pfening Archives.

lems encountered by the show in presenting a performance with a restricted roster.

An Associated Press wire story dated June 24, Beloit read: "While timekeepers who arrived today are busy checking up the list of dead and missing of Saturday's wreck of the Hagenbeck-Wallace show, this city and the countryside are gay with posters and big sheets announcing the show will exhibit here tomorrow. Moreover it will exhibit but not just as advertised. The show canvas and seats were not destroyed since they were in the first section of the train, and other shows have contributed acts which will allow the show to follow its schedule after missing only two dates, that at Hammond, Indiana and Monroe, Wisconsin today.

"There is little left of the old performers. Millie Jewell, the tiger trainer, will not be there to 'flirt with death,' and 'skirt the border land of eternity.' She is dead at Gary, Indiana. Nor will Arthur Dierckx, the strong Swiss, toy lightly with great iron bells, nor will Red Barnett drive his eight horse team behind a thundering chariot. The clownish mask of Eddie Devoe will be worn by another and the equestriennes and aerialists nearly all will be new to the show. The menagerie was saved, but Henry Miller, familiar to them as trainer and many of those who cared for them will be missed."

The *Beloit Daily News* of June 26 quoted Anna Donovan, wardrobe mistress: "And yet, we have to go on. It is our business. It is our bread and butter. We have homes to maintain and families to support and bring up. We have to make them become educated and useful citizens . . . we could not stop to mourn and put on black. We had to go on, no matter how we did feel inside."

After Beloit the show played Richland Center and Prairie Du Chien, Wisconsin; Charles City, Iowa and Owatonna, Minnesota. After the June 26 stand in Richland Cen-

ter the local newspaper ran the following after notice: "Big circus here. Suffering result of wreck, puts in hard day.

"The Hagenbeck-Wallace show which came to this city Wednesday, gave its second performance after having gone through the worst railroad wreck that ever effected an American show and a wreck which compared in magnitude of lives lost with the foremost of all railway wrecks in this country.

"The Saturday and Monday engagements could not be, of course, be fulfilled, but by the generous aid of other large circuses which sent on talent and

paraphernalia, the big show resumed its dates by appearing at Beloit Tuesday and coming on here Wednesday.

"When it reached here it was still suffering from its disorganization, and was unable to get its tents up in time to permit a parade and did not start its afternoon performance until half past three in the afternoon.

"That it had been a great show was easily seen when it gave performances. Its acts were great, but were without heart. The actors were suffering from the awful ordeal of losing in the most frightful manner, relatives and friends. The performance was too much like trying to be happy at a funeral.

"If, perchance the great Hagenbeck-Wallace shows ever come to this city again, they will profit by a reputation of having been the biggest and best circus ever visiting here."

The canvas used by the Hagenbeck show was believed to be the same as in 1917. The big top was a 150 foot round top with three 50s and two 30 foot middle pieces. The menagerie was an 80 foot round with five 40 foot middles. The side show top was about a 70 with two 40s. It was fronted by a banner line about 150 feet long. The padroom-dressing top was a 60 foot round with three 30 foot middles. The dining department had a cook tent and two dining tops each about 30 by 75 feet, one being used for the performers and staff and the other for the workmen. One large 60 foot round with three 45 foot middles held the draft stock believed to number about 170 head.

July 1 found the show in Marshall, Minnesota, followed by two weeks in the Dakotas. It then went back into Minnesota at Montevideo then returned to the Dakotas for stands at Wahpeton, Bismark, Jamestown, Thief River Falls, Grand Forks, Devils Lake and Minot. There was little news about the show during this period. Mrs. Faulk had a bad fall from one of the jumping horses at

Thief River Falls and was laid up for a few days.

It was during this period, exact date unknown, that the show received the new big top that was to have been delivered in Hammond, Indiana. It was said to be a thing of beauty and that the "light" effect of the new canvas added a great deal to the performance. So far as known it was the same size as the one it replaced.

After this stint the show returned to Minnesota, then played the next four weeks in Michigan and Wisconsin. The week of July 15 found it in Minnesota at Crookston, Fergus Falls, Alexandria, Little Falls and Brainerd. The next week it was at Ashland, Wisconsin, and then in Michigan at Ironwood, Iron Mountain, Iron River, Hancock and Calumet.

The new performance after the wreck was surprisingly well filled out. The show was reduced from sixteen to twelve displays.

But what had started as a skimpy show now had become more so. It is possible that potential audiences having heard of the heavy loss of life in the wreck assumed that the performance would be grossly cut and that it might not be worth the price. Whether this was so or not we have no way of knowing, but it appears that this part of the tour was not financially successful. Only displays six and seven were eliminated, the performers in these being moved about to fill vacancies in other spots. Thus the show kept the three rings and two stages for all the remaining displays.

The first fourteen days of August were in Wisconsin at Shawano, Antigo, Wassau, Ap-

The mass grave of the Hagenbeck-Wallace victims on June 26, 1918 in the Showmen's League plot in Woodlawn Cemetery in Chicago. Pfening Archives.



pleton, Fond Du Lac, Waupaca, Stevens Point, Portage and Beaver Dam. An after notice appeared in the Beaver Dam *Argus* following the stand there on August 10. It read: "The Hagenbeck-Wallace circus, which showed here last Saturday afternoon and evening, attracted two large audiences and gave good satisfaction. The circus, which came here from Portage, was late in arriving, the first section reaching the city about six o'clock. This fact, coupled with a shortage of men, delayed the street parade until one o'clock. The circus presents a three ring and two platform performance, and a large menagerie. All of the acts were excellent in spite of the fact that one of the trains, carrying many performers, was wrecked about a month ago killing or injuring 180 of the show's people."

The last three days in Wisconsin were at Oshkosh, Sheboygan and Racine. Until Racine there had been no news of the show for several weeks. At Racine, on August 14, Billy Simmons of the Ward flying return act broke a leg while doing a triple into the net at the conclusion of the act. On August 15 the show entered Illinois at Waukegan followed by Elgin and Aurora. On Saturday night after the show was loaded at Aurora the Pennsylvania Railroad refused to take the show to Hammond, which had been re-booked. The reason given was a war clause in its contract prevented it from doing so. This meant that Hammond was lost a second time that season.

Finally after much discussion the railroad did finally relent and moved the show to Logansport, the Tuesday stand, too late to give a parade.

After seven more days in Illinois and Indiana at Marion, Muncie, Lafayette, Kankakee, LaSalle and Sterling the show moved into Iowa on August 29 where they played Belle Plaine, Boone, Carrol and Omaha. On September 3 the Hagenbeck show began a four day stand at the Nebraska State Fair at Lincoln. The performances at the fair were given in front of the race track grandstand. It was very well received. Here another accident occurred when Rosa Rosalind, the premiere equestrienne bare-back rider, in doing her somersault from one horse to another had a bad fall and was out of the show for a few days. On September 7 in Creston Johnny McCracken had a bad fall during the races when his horse slipped and fell



Canvas spool wagons being unloaded from the 60 foot wood flats of the Hagenbeck show in 1918. Pfening Archives.

on top of him. He sustained a sprained ankle and many bad bruises.

After Centerville and Fort Madison the circus crossed the Mississippi into Illinois September 11 at Monmouth. Then came Canton and McComb. A late arrival in McComb allowed only a single show.

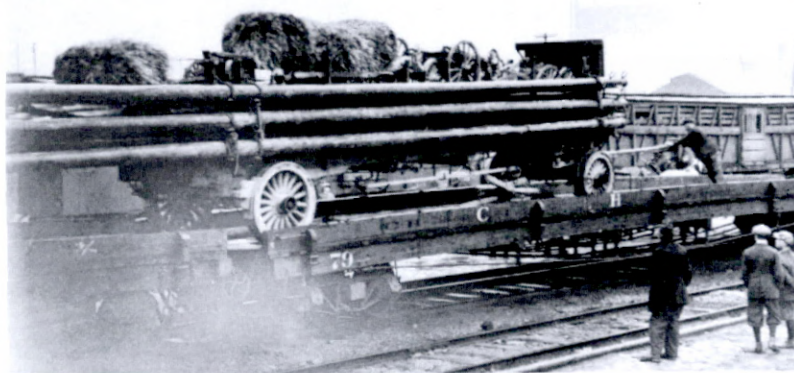
The show suffered another loss on September 23 with the death of press agent Bill Thompson at age forty-seven. He had been ill only a week and died of pneumonia at the American Theatrical Hospital.

The season was now nearing its end. On September 14 the show was in Litchfield and was followed by Robinson, Terre Haute and Indianapolis.

From Indianapolis the show moved into Chicago on the lake front at Grant Park. September 19 was allowed to set up the show, with no performances. This special stand to benefit the Stage Women's War Relief opened September 20 and was to last until October 6. A parade was given in Chicago on opening day.

A special program insert was printed for this engagement. This section was pasted into the regular program booklet which was

The big top pole wagon on a flat in 1918. Pfening Archives.



serts of this type were used by both the Barnum and Ringling shows and contained local advertising sold by the banner salesman. The Hagenbeck Chicago insert listed the board of directors and committee members of the Stage Women's War Relief. But more importantly it listed the displays of the performance. This listing gives the performance after the wreck.

The printed program was as follows:

Display 1. A grand, gorgeous, spectacular tournament, followed by the actual start of the performance. Ring 1. Three Damons. Stage 1 Four Chinese. Ring 2 Lions (no trainer listed). Stage 2 Twelve Arabs. Ring 3 Five Arlons.

Display 2. Beautiful statuary. Ring 1 Bronze and white statuary, McDhu Sisters and Miss Jay. Stage 1 Bronze and white statuary Derickx Bros. Ring 2 Emil Schweyer in the steel arena with five lions. Stage 2 Bronze and white statuary, Max Dierckx. Ring 3 Statues, Misses. Sanger, Kleinpeter and Martine.

Display 3. Riding and animal acts. Ring 1 C. Rooney. Ring 2 Riding lion on horse, Miss Jewell. Ring 3 Reno McCree.

Display 4. Dazzling, death defying aerial acts. Ring 1 Mayme Ward, cloud swing. Stage 1 Ward and Sister, double trapeze. Ring 2 on quarter poles cloud swings by Muriel Ward. Single trap, Ida White. Roman rings, A. Lafleur. Roman rings Roy Sisters. Stage 2, Flying rings, Bessie Cattanach. Ring 3 Cloud swing by Willie Ward.

Display 5. Wonderful animal acts. Ring 1 Performing elephants presented by Miss McDhu. Ring 2 Tiger riding an elephant, presented by Miss Jewell. Ring 3 Military elephants presented by Miss Donovan.

Display 6. Variety number. Ring 1 Trotting horse by Miss Cottrell. Stage 1 Perch act by Dierckx Bros. Ring 2 Gene and Mary Enos perch pole. Stage 2 Horse and pony presented by Miss Powell.

Display 7. Marvelous acts by daring performers. Ring 1 Iron jaw, McDhu Sisters. Stage 1 Iron jaw by Gothards. Ring 2 The Eight Flying Wards. Stage 2 Iron jaw act by the LeRoy troupe. Ring 3 Human top Lafleur.

Display 8. Beautiful riding acts. Ring 1 Miss Hodgini. Ring 2 Rosa Rosalind, queen of all riders. Ring 3 Miss Rooney.

Display 9. Daring performances in the air. Ring 1 Wire act by the Gothards. Stage 1 Wire act by the Avalons. Ring 2 Wire act by the

BIGGEST CIRCUS IN THE WORLD
LOGANSPORT TUESDAY AUGUST 20

CARL HAGENBECK-WALLACE CIRCUS

THE WONDER SHOW
THE LIKE OF WHICH YOU NEVER SAW BEFORE
ALL NEW AGAIN! ALL RIGHT AGAIN!
 A CIRCUS GATHERED FROM 18 NATIONS.

6 ARENAS USED FOR CAPITAL INVESTED ITS 1,001 WONDERS. **\$3,000,000**

6 RAILROAD TRAINS—8.
 22 TENTS—22.
 8 RINGS—8.
 400 PERFORMERS.

3 HERDS OF ELEPHANTS 3 NEVER WITNESSED A CIRCUS LIKE THIS. **400 WILD ANIMALS**

CARL HAGENBECK'S ZOOLOGICAL PARADISE
 World's Greatest Trained Beasts
 Performing in a Massive Steel-Girded Arena. The Wide World, Civilized and Uncivilized, Hatched to Amuse and Complete what is now the **Biggest Zoo On Earth**

THE GREAT WALLACE CIRCUS DE LUXE **50 CLOWNS 50** INCLUDING PRO THE RINGS JESTER

Only Circus With Trained Wild Animals **Biggest and Best Holiday in All the Year**

WONDERS, NOVELTIES, FEATURES FROM EVERY LAND

OSCAR LOWANDE First person in history of the world turning a somersault from one running horse to another.	FLYING WARD Daring and sensational aerial artist. Performing in dome of world's biggest tent.	SIX CEVENES Most dexterous performers on lofty double aerial wire in earth's history.
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3-MILE GALA, GOLDEN STREET PARADE 10 A. M.
 All tents illuminated by electricity at night. DOORS OPEN AT 1 AND 2 P. M. PERFORMANCE BEGINS AT 7 AND 9 P. M. ONE TICKET ADMITS TO ALL. CHILDREN UNDER 10.

Newspaper ad used in Logansport, Indiana for the Hagenbeck show in 1918. Pfening Archives.

Lamonts. Stage 2 Wire act by the LeRoys. Ring 3 Wire act by Lafleur.

Display 10. Stage 1 Eight International Arabian Acrobats. Stage 2 Mankichi Troupe of Japanese acrobats. (These two acts were advertised as special for this engagement.)

Display 11. Ring 2 Clown band.

Display 12. Ring 2 The Cycling McNutts, wonders of the wheel. (Special for this engagement.)

Display 13. Monster menage act. Ring 1 Charles Rooney, Al Dean, Bessie Cattannach. Stage 1 Gladys Gorman on the track with buggy and horse. Ring 2 Jumping horses by Mad Martell and Bessie Hill. Stage 2 On the track Bessie Hill, William Hill and Louis Hill. Ring 3 Virgil Barnett, Miss McDhu and Mr. Rooney.

Display 14. Startling and wonderful. Ring 1 Damon Troupe, acrobats. Stage 1 Chong Ya, Chinese acrobats. Ring 2 Acrobats Twelve acrobats. Stage 2 Dierckx Bros., strong men. Ring 3 Avalon Troupe, acrobats.

Display 15. Comedy acts. Ring 1 Three Lusters. Stage 1 Herman Lenzen. Ring 2 Boxing kangaroo and clowns. Stage 2 Damon and dog. Ring 3 George Donahue.

Display 16. Riding acts. Ring 1 The Three Rooneys in jockey act. Ring 2 Cottrell-Powell Troupe in carrying act. Ring 3 The McCrees in jockey act.

Races. Steeple Chase, Hill and company. Jockey act, Virgil act by Batty and Smith. Roman riding by Luster, Dean and Stout. Liberty race, Virgil Barnett on Boxer.

A note followed advised those remaining for the "Frontier Days" (after show) would be permitted to occupy the grand stand chairs without extra charge.

Millie Jewell, the McDhu sisters, Bessie Catannach, the Derickx brothers and Virgil Barnett's names are listed in this revised program, even though they had died in the wreck. Other performers were obviously filling in for these acts. With so much doubling by performers in the show it may have been that the management did not wish to list these names additional times. Other than the special acts brought in for this engagement it appears that no new acts were brought in following the wreck to replace those that were lost.

Although good crowds continued it closed the stand early on September 29. The show moved directly to the West Baden, Indiana winter quarters. However most of the wild animals were left for a while in Chicago as a menagerie for the Chicago Permanent Exposition in the Siegal-Cooper Building.

The lawyers were still busy after the show closed, working on damage claims from the wreck. On October 16 the following story appeared in a Chicago newspaper: "Circus wreck victims sue road for \$146,000. Damage suits aggregating \$146,000 have been filed in federal court against the Michigan Central railroad.

"The four petitions just filed are the result of the Hagenbeck-Wallace circus wreck at Ivanhoe, Indiana June 22, when many people lost their lives. The petitioners are Grave Jessup, administratrix for her son, Leroy Jessup, asking \$25,000; Reno and Hattie McCree for \$50,000 each for personal injuries, and \$650 damages for clothing and property destroyed, and the fourth by Ernest Hitchcock, who seeks damages aggregating \$20,600."

On November 18 counsel for the Michigan Central filed a motion in United States court asking that the summons served in the personal injury suits be quashed.

The railroad claimed improper serving of the summonses was made in that the papers were not delivered to a conductor, ticket agent or officer of the company. The U. S.

Marshall who had served most of the papers declared the summonses were served on Fred Dirks, who was connected with the Toledo railroad administration offices. The outcome of the claims is unknown.

After arriving back at winter quarters the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus was placed in bankruptcy. The wreck and a generally unsuccessful season had been too much for Ed Ballard.

John R. Ward was appointed receiver. A complete inventory of show property was printed in preparation for a sale. The inventory included about a thousand items. The canvas was not listed as it was probably foreclosed by U. S. Tent and Awning Co. for past due mortgage payments.

The list is far too long to print in its entirety but a listing of the animals wagons and rail equipment is of interest.

ANIMALS:

Forty-eight ring stock horses; 45 Shetland ponies; 1 striped hyena; 1 puma; 2 male leopards; 2 male tigers; 5 male lions; 1 female lion; 1 male wolf; 1 female wolf; 3 cub timer wolves; 2 Great Dane dogs; 2 male polar bears; 2 female polar bears; 3 male elephants; 7 female elephants; 5 male camels; 1 female camel; 4 parrots; 3 male ostriches; 1 female axis deer; 1 female roebuck deer; 1 albino deer; 1 male drybroski deer; 1 male hybrid zebu; 1 female cape buffalo; 1 female bylgau; 1 male homid horse; 1 male audad (Siberian mountain goat); 2 male kangaroos; 1 female kangaroo; 1 male alpaca; 1 female hippopotamus; 6 monkeys; 1 sacred

A sticker was placed on the 1916 Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus program cover for the Chicago date in 1918. A new program had not been published in 1917 or 1918. The new performance was listed on a special insert for this date. Pfening Archives.



cow; 5 hybrid zebra and 1 male American buffalo.

WAGONS:

30 Baggage wagons, numbers 71, 99, 68, 89, 100, 81, 59, 56, 54, 64, 91, 61, 90, 78, 70, 88, 63, 60, 66, 53, 65, 87, 77, 102, 51, 109, 72, 53 (closed), 62 and 92.

1 Candy stand wagon 76.
3 Canvas spool wagons, 66, 71 and 67.
3 Stake and Chain wagons 82, 74 and 100.

1 Elephant cart.
2 Pole wagons 75 and 79.
2 Jack wagons 78 and

59.
1 Chandelier wagon 78.
1 Police patrol wagon 1-

D.
1 Pony police patrol.
1 Blacksmith wagon 69.
1 Automobile wagon 69.
2 Stringer wagons 70 and 72.

2 Water wagons 120 and 121.
4 Cookhouse wagons 51, 120, 50 and 52.

1 Rigging wagon 83.
3 Property wagons 62, 88 and 107.

2 Chariots.
1 Small tableaux (Jap Wagon.)

2 Stake drivers.
21 Cages 18 (No good), 6, 2, 12, 10, 11, 19, 7, 5, 18, 16, 15, 24, 4, 17, 1, 6, 8, 3, and 9. (One old one with no number.)
9 Parade wagons 22, 21, 25, 20, 24, 14, 26, 28 and 27.

1 Ticket and office wagon, no number.
1 Ticket and baggage wagon 23.
1 Commissary wagon, no number.
1 Black rubber tired buggy.
1 White rubber tired buggy.
1 Air calliope (Harp & Jesters) 31.
2 Dynamo electric wagons 103 and 104.
2 Knox tractors, 45 H. P. 1 and 2.
1 Five passenger Ford auto.
1 Dog wagon 55.

RAIL CARS:

24 Flat cars 70, 65, 60, 66, 71, 67, 63, 62, 61, 51, 50, 83, 74, 68, 82, 81, 69, 73, 76, 72, 77, 79, 75 and 58.

12 Stock cars 55, 38, 46, 39, 40, 30, 48, 36, 45, 42, 49 and 52.

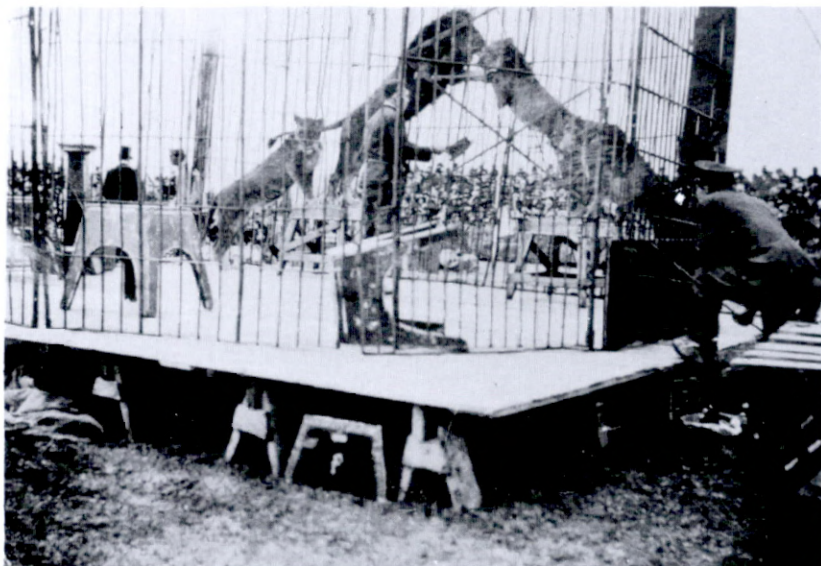
1 Store car 29.
2 Advertising cars 1 and 2.
8 Sleeping cars 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14 and 18.
1 Private car "Lost River."

Some additional items are interesting. Thirty-five side show department items included 12 stages and 5 ticket boxes, 3 center poles, 9 quarter poles, 32 side poles, 13 banner poles (no banners were listed), 10 water pails, 25 chairs and 13 stage ladders.

Although all of the tents, other than candy

stand tops and toilet tops were missing from the list the poles were listed. The big top poles were: six 47 foot center poles, twenty-six 32 foot quarter poles, thirty-eight 28 foot quarter poles, ninety-five 3 foot (?) quarter poles. No big top side poles were listed. For menagerie: five 33 foot center poles, fourteen 22 foot quarter poles, forty-eight 13 foot side poles. For horse tent: four 32 foot center poles, twenty-six 20 foot quarter poles, sixty-five 8 foot side poles.

Seating equipment listed included the following. For grand stand: 21 lengths 10 tiers



Emil Schwyer and his performing lions during an open air performance at the Nebraska State Fair in 1918. Pfening Archives.

high, 4 jacks and stringers. For blues: 38 lengths 15 tiers high, 4 jacks and stringers. For star back reserved seats: 16 lengths 12 tiers high, 4 jacks and stringers.

The list of lithographs on advertising car No. 1 included sixteen days of paper wall work (1200 sheets per day), 1500 sheets extra paper, 2500 sheets of lithographs assorted and 5,000 yellow four page heralds. The paper inventory on car No. 2 listed 45 days paper (12,000 sheets per day), 7957 sheets extra paper, 2756 sheets of lithographs and 355 sheets of cloth banners.

The list of equipment and animals included all owned by the show, including some that had not been used on the show during the 1918 season.

The sale took place as advertised on December 28, 1918. The two principal bidders were Jerry Mugivan and Bert Bowers, and John Ringling. Mugivan and Bowers were the purchasers paying \$36,100. There is no records of what John Ringling offered.

The sale did not affect the farm property at West Baden owned by Ed Ballard, only the circus property stored there. An article appeared in the *Peru Republican* the day after

the sale which read: "A surprise was sprung in the circus world Saturday, when, at a receiver's sale, held at French Lick, Indiana, when the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus passed into the hands of Jerry Mugivan and Bert Bowers, owners of the John Robinson Circus and the Howe Great London Shows.

"The sale was conducted Saturday afternoon, December 28, at the French Lick Springs Hotel, sealed bids being presented. The price paid by Mugivan and Bowers, it is understood, was \$36,100, and it is the general opinion that these enterprising showmen

secured a bargain. The second highest bid was that of John Ringling. There were several other bids on the property, but none was offered by Ed Ballard, former owner of the majority of the stock in the circus corporation.

"The Carl Hagenbeck and Great Wallace Show Company, which operated the circus, was put in the hands of a receiver, John R. Ward, several months ago, and the announcement made that the property would be sold. At that time opinion seemed to obtain among circus people that Mr. Ballard or some of the other stockholders would

bid in the show, but it was generally understood by Mr. Ballard's friends that he would retire from the circus business, which took up a large part of his time, and devote himself entirely to his large hotel and other interests.

"No statement has been made by Mugivan and Bowers as to their plans for the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus, but it is thought they will continue its operation under the same title and use about the same number of cars as in the past few seasons.

"The circus was sold in its entirety, goodwill and trade name, and property, which included twenty-five flat cars, twelve stock cars, two advertising cars, one store car, eight sleeping coaches, ten elephants, six camels, five hybrid zebras, six lions, two male tigers, one hippopotamus, two Russian bears, four polar bears, two buffaloes, two ostriches, six monkeys, thirty-six parade wagons, including twenty-one wild animal cages; fifty-five baggage wagons, three canvas spool wagons, two pole wagons, two stake drivers, two dynamo lighting plants, one complete gasoline lighting system, two 45 horse power Knox tractors, one patented gasoline cooking system, one complete set of poles, blocks and seats, harness for 220 head of horses.

"The Carl Hagenbeck Great Wallace Show Co., Inc. was bought from Ben Wal-

lace of Peru, Indiana. After the first few years Mr. Ballard bought out the interests of the late John B. Warner, the late Charles Hageman, John Talbott and H. L. Harrison, and when Charles Corey retired from the management of the show Mr. Ballard took over his interests also, Crawford Fairbanks, of Terre Haute, remaining with Ballard as the only member of the original group of stockholders.

"The Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus has had more than its share of bad luck the past few seasons, culminating in the disastrous wreck near Gary, Indiana, last June. Mr. Ballard, in the few years he was in the circus business, showed a pronounced aptitude for the show business, and season after season overcame difficulties that would have daunted the courage of the most experienced. His retiring is a distinct loss to the show world.

"Jerry Mugivan and Bert Bowers are considered the most progressive and able of the younger generation of circus men. They have worked their way up from the bottom, until today, with the acquisition of the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus, they are second only to the Ringling brothers in this field."

Another later newspaper article reported Mugivan and Bowers were making arrangements for their new circus to take the road the coming season. The Hagenbeck-Wallace and the John Robinson circuses were to be operated altogether separately. It had not been announced as to which member of the firm would take direct charge of the different properties. The John Robinson circus continued its headquarters in Peru under the five year contract with B. E. Wallace. It was stated at the office of the John Robinson shows that neither the quarters at West Baden or the Peru quarters were sufficiently large to accommodate both properties.

Circumstances surrounding the sale of the show by Ballard at such a low price has been one of the great unanswered questions in circus history. The fact that a few years later Ballard turned up as an equal owner of the American Circus Corporation further suggests that some "arrangement" was made by the three at the time of the sale.

The Hagenbeck-Wallace Shows Company, an Ohio corporation, was formed January 29, 1919. This new company was the official purchaser of the Hagenbeck show from Ballard. On May 26, 1921 all stock of the Ohio corporation was purchased by the American Circus Corporation. The com-

bined balance sheet for the Ohio corporation as of February 1, 1921 was \$577,547.66.

On November 15, 1920 Mugivan and Bowers increased their circus holdings with the purchase of the Sells-Floto Circus from H. H. Tammen for \$219,950. The Yankee Robinson circus was also purchased from William P. Hall that year for around \$90,000.

Edward Ballard's wealth and his continuing interest in the circus business provided new capital for Mugivan and Bowers expansion.

Late in 1921 all of the Mugivan and Bowers circus properties were placed under a



A ten horse baggage team pulling the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus big top pole wagon during the 1918 season. Pfening Archives.

new holding company. Ed Ballard was officially identified as a major owner of the new company.

Stock certificates of the American Circus Corporation were issued on December 14, 1921 as follows: Bert Bowers 5,112 shares; Jerry Mugivan, 5,112; Ed Ballard, 5,112; Zack Terrell, 474 and Charles D. Odom [Danny Odom] 474.

Although a major stock holder in the American Circus Corporation Ed Ballard was not active in the management of any of the shows. He did however travel on the various shows from time to time. An interesting note appears in the 1921 Sells-Floto route book. On July 18, 1921 a wind storm occurred in Gary, Indiana at five o'clock in afternoon. Two elephants started a stampede, making their way down the street where they were finally stopped by Edward Ballard and manager Zack Terrell. A blowdown also happened during the storm.

The American Circus Corporation prospered during the 1920s. On November 27, 1928 it purchased the assets, titles and goodwill of the Sparks Circus from Henry B. Gentry for \$206,200. Gentry had reportedly

snookered Charles Sparks who did not know Gentry was acting on behalf of Mugivan, Bowers and Ballard. On November 17, 1928 Ed Ballard had loaned the corporation \$250,000 on a one year note to finance the Sparks purchase. On December 28, 1928 the corporation purchased the Al G. Barnes Circus for \$150,000. An additional \$250,000 on a one year note was borrowed from Ballard to finance this transaction.

On January 1, 1929 the American Circus Corporation sold all of its assets to Circus City Zoological Gardens, Inc., an Indiana corporation that had been organized on November 21, 1928. The 1,000 shares of Zoological Gardens stock was owned by: Edward Ballard, 306.4 shares; Bert Bowers, 153.2 shares; Bert Bowers, trustee, 153.2 shares; Jerry Mugivan, 153.2 shares; Jerry Mugivan, trustee, 153.2 shares; Zack Terrell, 52.4 shares and C. D. Odom 28.4 shares. Edward Ballard's ownership continued as an approximate one third owner.

While the American Circus Corporation had disposed of all its assets and liabilities and for all purposes ceased to exist after January 1, 1929 it was not dissolved. Ballard's interest in this shell corporation remained around one third.

The capital stock account of the American Circus Corporation showed a balance of \$1,669,800 until December 31, 1928. On that date the balance was decreased by \$363,706.95 due to the writing down in the investment value of its subsidiaries, thereby leaving a balance of \$1,306,093.05. This latter amount was set upon the books of the Circus City Zoological Gardens, Inc. as the value of its capital stock on January 1, 1929.

The net profit of the company for the period from May 26, 1921 to December 31, 1928 was \$1,371,046.39. During this period dividends in the amount of \$1,304,830.37 had been paid to the stock holders. With other accounting adjustments, covering income taxes, write downs of book value of investment in subsidiaries and goodwill the balance sheet showed a deficit of \$363,706.95 on December 31, 1928.

On September 6, 1929 John Ringling purchased the Circus City Zoological Gardens, Inc. and the American Circus Corporation, paying \$1,714,000. Obviously Edward Ballard's investment in the American Circus Corporation had been very profitable.

Research information for this article was provided by John Polacsek, the Circus World Museum and the Pfening Archives.

Circus Wagon History File

W. C. COUP'S SALPINGASIAN CHARIOT OF MNEMOSYNE

By Fred Dahlinger, Jr.

The steam calliope has always been the hallmark of the circus parade, but in the 1870's and 1880's the major traveling shows also exhibited another type of steam organ. These vehicles housed loudly voiced mechanical organs or orchestrions, the bellows of which were worked by small steam engines. The steam was generated in a small vertical boiler, the presence of which misled some scribes to write that there were two calliopes in the march.

Barnum, Forepaugh and Cole all owned steam organ wagons, but the greatest proponent of such devices was W. C. Coup, who featured no less than three in his 1881 street parade. Coup's long time associate, Wesley L. Jukes, was responsible for creating most of the instruments which were used in the organ wagons, and also outfitted the museums of the Barnum and Coup shows with a wide variety of mechanical and automatic devices and figures.

In 1983 we published two monograms in *Bandwagon* concerning the origin and history of one of the Coup organ wagons. The original identification of the vehicle as a Coup fixture was augmented by Stuart Thayer's observation that the carvings on the top of the original wagon were later removed and used to create a small tableau associated with the Forepaugh and Ringling circuses. Thayer's observation has now been substantiated by the discovery of the rare stereo view accompanying this article which shows the wagon in what is believed to be its original configuration. It is now reasonable to conclude that the top organ pipes and drum apparatus telescoped downward into the body of the wagon for travel.

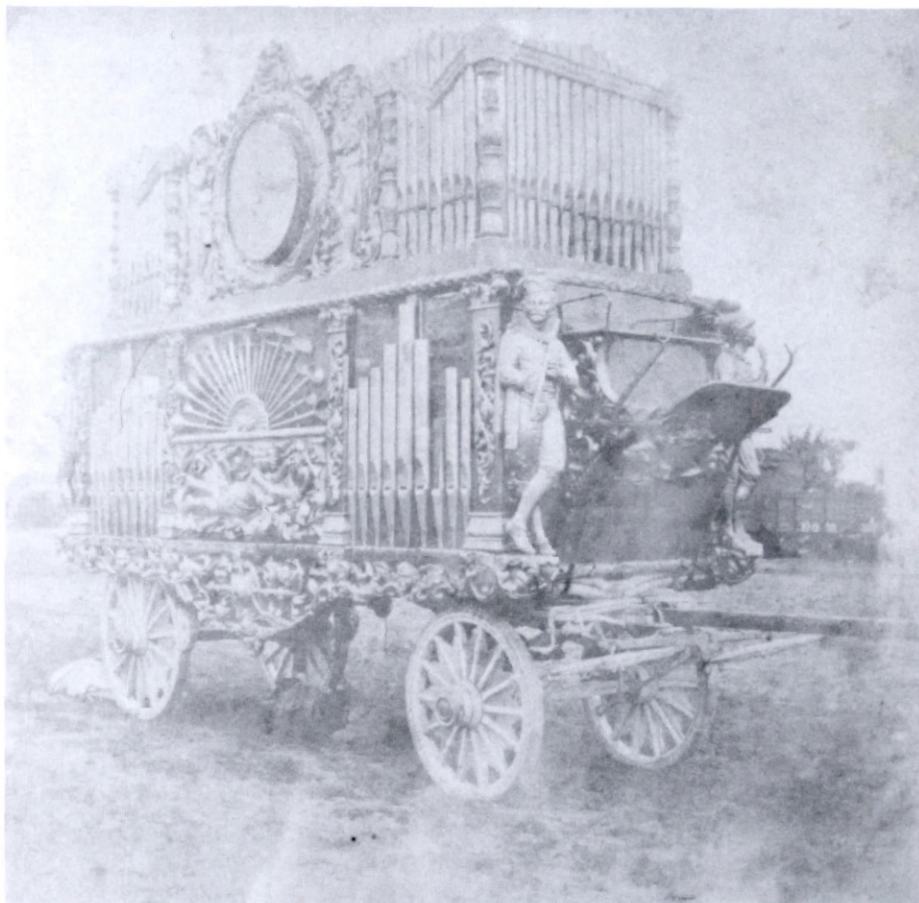
The mammoth proportions of this Coup wagon are readily apparent when it is compared to similar views of the Orchestmelo-chor, the Barnum show's famous organ wagon. Both wagons were constructed within a year or two of each other, and one may well have been constructed in imitation of the other. A third vehicle of similar proportions and telescoping design can be found in the well known W. W. Cole one hundred sheet lithograph of 1883. It is our opinion that the Coup vehicle was one of the "Four Gigantic Steam Power Musical Orpheodes" which Barnum's ex-partner so proudly advertised;

indeed, it is probably his Salpingasian Chariot of Mnemosyne, one of those legendary multi syllable titled vehicles commemorating the muses which bill writers glorified for the imaginations of gullible Americans.

The scrollwork on the Coup organ wagon and two other ex-Coup wagons, John Robinson tableau #55 and bandchariot #52, appear

Robb or another carver of equal skill. These figures were deleted from the wagon by the mid 1890's, but a search for their presence on another wagon has proven futile.

Vintage 1870's design elements found on the wagon include the front panel mounted driver's seat and footrest, and the front and backward facing corner figures. By 1882-1883 corner figures were being recessed into corner niches on tableaux and animal dens



to have originated in the same shop. The carving is second rate to that found on similar vintage Fielding wagons, but it is alike in execution, suggesting that a shop in or near New York or Newark, New Jersey supplied the decorations. The wagon's musician corner figures are very artistic carvings and probably came from the shop of Samuel

and the drivers seats were on the wagon roofs. The double outboard foot brake arrangement is one that this writer has not seen previously.

Our grateful thanks to Richard W. Flint, who owns the original stereo view, for granting permission to have this rare photograph reproduced here.

HERBERT'S HORSES

Part Four

BY DOROTHY HERBERT

CHAPTER 51 BACK WITH COLE BROS. CIRCUS

I sold my truck and the trick riding horse; I thanked everyone, and called Mr. Yates at the studio to tell him of my plans and to thank Mr. Brown for being so patient. He wished me luck and said he understood my wanting to go back to the circus. My car was already packed, so I now lit out for home. It was quite a long trip, to be sure, but nothing like the one out to California had been.

The Cole show was in winter quarters when I arrived in the spring of 1940. My home in Scottsburg, Indiana, was not too far from the from their winter quarters in Rochester. I hired a truck and had my horses brought to my barn where I could work with them.

Going back to the Cole show this time was sort of like going home. My friends the Reiffenachs had left the Ringling Bros. show and were now with the Cole show. So was Gene Allen, whom I liked so well, and a host of others whom I enjoyed being with.

We no sooner had the opening over with and were out on the road than the girls asked me to form a Manege Club. As usual, I was handling the radio shows, so the shopping would be no problem.

Without saying anything to me, they got

Dorothy Herbert on the Cole show in 1940. Pfening Archives.



together, held an election, and when I walked into the dressing room, they shouted, "Good morning, Madam President."

I thanked them and remarked that I thought this was a sneaky way to get their shopping done, but I was pleased as punch; I was back again and one of the gang.

I have not dwelled on what kind of a gang this one was. As a rule, we had an initiation for new members, but it never amounted to much; this time they elected to initiate the president. I was on my way to the cookhouse when a group of the members grabbed me and carried me to the elephants' watering tub, where I was dunked three times.

I was speechless, which I guess was just as well, as they shouted, "Long live our president," after just trying to drown me.

I suppose our pranks sound childish today, and maybe they were, but we had fun. We were like one big happy family. It was nothing like today in the circus business where everyone goes to their own house trailer and lives their own life in their own world, not much caring what is happening to the other guy.

I remember once on the Ringling Bros. show getting an invitation to join the Zacchinnis which was quite an event. There were so many of them they rated half a railroad car. Besides the brothers who did the cannon act there were their other relatives who performed different acts in the show and their wives. The food was unbelievable, at least for a midnight snack. They would begin with an antipasto--this was so good you had to watch lest you fill up on it and not have room for the spaghetti.

While the ladies were preparing all of this, the men entertained with music. Each of them was very talented, and if they were not playing an instrument, they joined in song. I used to imagine I was in the midst of a gypsy caravan, and would have loved to have jumped up and danced. I never did it, of course; now I wish I had.

CHAPTER 52 ELEPHANTS

The year was 1940. I had taken my personal horses home with me and, after finding out that it would not be feasible to play the show which I had booked in Berlin on account of the war, I then booked myself with Orrin Davenport to play all of his dates.

First came the rains and then the flood.

All of the land from Louisville up to within a few miles of my home was under water. A whole story could be written about that alone. After all of the schools and churches were full, everyone in town opened their doors and took in as many as they had room for. We had people sleeping all over the barn.

We had an old battery radio set, in fine shape, that Mother had hung onto when we had moved from the farm where there had



Photo of Dorothy used in Cole Bros. newspaper ads. Pfening Archives.

not been electricity. Now that the lights were out everywhere, and our radio was the only one around that was working, our home became the base from which all of the rescue squads operated. Day and night we listened to calls for help. Somehow the phone was kept in order for emergencies.

Late one evening I received a call from Orrin Davenport who had heard of the predicament which we were in: "Dorothy, somehow or other you must get here. They have put out a lot of publicity on you and it is very important that you make it."

I told him that there was no way I could possibly get my horses out. They were in no danger, but there was no transportation for people or anything else.

"All right," said he, "leave your horses,

but see if there isn't some way that you can get to Peru. Maybe you can work the elephant act or find a horse there that you can ride; anything, just get here."

There was no way out. If there were, everyone would have been going. Besides, all of the money I had on hand had long since been spent to buy food for the people who were now living in my home. There was no chance of them starving, however, as by now the Red Cross was dropping food by plane.

I went to my good friend, Mr. I. C. Morgan, who owned the Scott County Packing Company, which supplied canned goods to a chain of grocery stores. Mr. Morgan had been donating canned goods and the use of his trucks and drivers since the start of the flood, so they came and went without question. I told him my story.

"Well, now, I will tell you how we will do it," said he. "We will stack your trunk in the back with the canned goods, you will ride in the cab with the driver. If anyone questions you, just say that you are a nurse."

With a feeling of embarrassment, I added, "There is one more thing, I have no cash on hand. My money is in a Louisville bank which is under water."

Mr. Morgan reached into his pocket and pulled out a few crumpled bills. "Wait, I think I might know someone with cash, our cook; she tucks money away in all kinds of places." Sure enough, she did lend me some money and I was on my way.

The truck ride was long and quite scary. We went through quite a lot of deep water, and several times we had to be towed. The driver took me as far as Indianapolis where I boarded a train for Peru.

I was wet and dirty and my hair was in strings. People on the train were kind. They thought that I was a refugee who had somehow managed to get out. I thought it might sound very odd if I told them I was on my way to join a circus, so I did not enlighten them.

I left my trunk in the baggage room at the railroad station, took my suitcase and checked into the Bearas Hotel. After a hot bath, a good meal, and a nice long sleep, I took a cab to winter quarters the next morning.

After locating Arkie Scott, the head elephant man and, in my opinion, one of the best in the business, I informed him of the reason for my visit. Now, although Arkie and I had been friends for many years, he proceeded to let me and the world in general

know just what he thought of the idea--and it was plenty!

"What are they going to send me next? First it was ballet broads and now a horse woman! Well, don't think for a moment that on account of our friendship that I am going to go easy on you. I intend to work the act fast, like I always do, and if you miss the mounts that is your tough luck!"

I knew this tough attitude to be an act to cover up his Jimmy Stewart nature. Regardless of his ability for handling tough elephants, which was well known, he was a pussycat where women were concerned. I countered with, "But you will at least show me how to do the mounts, won't you?"

Whereupon he snapped, "Of course, what do you think I am, some sort of a heel? But

trunk. I quickly found the space allotted to me, but there was no sign of my trunk. A thorough search convinced me that it had not arrived. I went to the phone and placed a call to the stationmaster in Peru, who had promised faithfully to see that my trunk was loaded on the circus train. I was told that some *idiot* upon seeing the rain-soaked tag attached to it and, being able to distinguish only the word "Indianapolis" on it, had returned the trunk to its original starting point. Although this explanation did not sound plausible to me, there was nothing I could do but accept it and hope that he would keep his promise to get the trunk to me as soon as possible. I will always think that he simply forgot to load it.

Returning to my friends in the seats, I found that Arkie had sent his assistant to the train to check on the elephants, but since he had been gone for an abnormal length of time, Arkie was now going to check up on him.



Pull away teams unloading Cole Bros. Circus train in 1940. Pfening Archives.

we leave for Wichita tomorrow and you don't learn this act in one easy lesson."

It was here that my trapeze work, trick riding, and bareback training stood me in good stead. The mounts were duck soup for me, and Arkie, who was used to breaking in girls with little strength, was pleased. "Are you sure you never worked with bulls before?" he asked. I knew by that we would be okay together in the act.

Arkie and I, and the other performers leaving from Peru for the date, talked for quite a while on the train the next night before retiring. When we arrived in Wichita it was snowing and bitter cold. We went to our hotels, and met at the building a little after noon.

Upon arriving at the building after lunch, I found that it was cold; Arkie was waiting for it to warm up a bit before bringing the elephants in. Meanwhile, the band was setting up the music for the different acts. The heat had been turned on, but the people hanging their rigging were still wearing overcoats.

I nodded to the little group chatting in the seats, as I went by in search of my circus

assistant, now in the clear, ran to the nearest phone to call an ambulance. When we heard the sirens, we knew at once that something had gone wrong.

The doors to the baggage car with the elephants inside were locked until someone with expertise could be summoned. Orrin Davenport called Zack Terrell and told him what had happened. Zack, with his usual efficiency, said that he would contact two elephant trainers at different places and have them come by plane. He would contact two because, the weather being what it was, one or the other might not be able to make it for the show.

Ace Donovan and Bert Pettis arrived within hours of each other, but too late to rehearse the act. They managed to get the first three elephants out of the baggage car, but the fourth one, who was causing all the trouble, would not let them get through to unchain the one behind. This all happened on the day we were to open.

Going back to the night before: with all of the excitement, it was after midnight before John Smith, the horse trainer, got around to showing me the stock that I was to work. Since they had been playing another indoor date when I went to Peru to practice, I had

no idea at all what he might have in mind for me to do.

The Shriner's publicity department had been playing up the "just returned from Hollywood" bit big, seemingly unaware that neither my footprints or those of my horses had been encased in cement in front of a theater. I doubt if Greta Garbo ever considered me much of a threat, or that my debut had anything to do with her early retirement.

The big black horse, which John had the groom bring out, was a doll. Because I had worked with John before, I caught her cues at once. Luckily, she did a fine act, for this, unlike most Shrine shows, was a one-ring affair and all of the acts worked alone.

The pony drill was quite another matter. Old John was a very good trainer, but it seemed that every time he got an act going real well, they took it away from him and give it to someone else to work. He then would, again, be working another green act. Great for the show, but John got fed up with it. Now, if John liked you, he would do anything in the world for you; if not, he would act as though you did not exist. Right now, he was taking great delight in explaining to me the cues of this pony drill, which he had broke to work on the show himself.

"Well, I'll tell you," said John, "when I broke these ponies I broke them so no one else could work them unless I wanted them to."

Such cues! Everything was backwards and contrary to the way one normally worked such an act, but once you were able to catch onto the cues they worked perfectly.

But my troubles were not yet over; my circus trunk had not yet arrived, so I was without wardrobe.

Orrin Davenport prevailed upon the wardrobe ladies to come to my rescue and, somehow or other, they managed to put together three costumes for me.

Now, for the elephant act. There would be no time for a rehearsal. Who would work the act? The two trainers flipped a coin and Bert Pettis won, or lost, depending on how you look at it. He did not know the routine, nor did I, with just that one day's practice in winter quarters. One of the helpers came up with the fact that he knew when to set the props. I figured that Bert would work the act the first time by himself, but . . . no.

He explained: "The act is going to be so weak with two of the bulls out of it that having someone in there, styling and dancing, will be a big help. I understand that Inez is a sapper, [an elephant who will hit you with her trunk if she takes a dislike to you] so stay away from her. Now, every time that I call out 'mount,' you jump on an elephant and style; they will all hold you in their trunk."

Great . . . only when we got in the ring I didn't know Inez from anybody else! However, Bert, being the great elephant trainer

CHATTANOOGA

ENGEL STADIUM CIRCUS GROUNDS

SAT., AUG. 23

ONLY RAILROAD CIRCUS COMING

A 1941 Cole newspaper ad listing Jack Dempsey and Dorothy Herbert as the stars. Pfening Archives.

that he was, made the act look good despite the fact that all of the odds were against him, including the elephants and me.

In the meantime, what to do about the two elephants still on the train? The bad one was completely unmanageable. "Gone amok," they said. There was no alternative but to put her to sleep.

That might sound relatively easy, but it was far from that. First, it was necessary to

obtain permission from the owners. Mr. Adkins and Mr. Terrell readily agreed but, because she was on the premises of the railroad company, it was also necessary to get permission from them. Now, it seemed that no one could make a decision without a board of directors meeting and a lot of red tape. They finally got everything resolved--and I found myself in the ring with one more elephant.

Needless to say, I spent all of my free time visiting Arkie in the hospital. He came up with this explanation: for many years this elephant had been riding in circus trains and, to her, this was her home; however, to play the indoor shows they had rented baggage cars, which went at a much greater speed than the circus trains ever did. They also rolled and made all sorts of strange noises. Perhaps the elephant had become frightened and panicked. There was no way of ever knowing for sure.

Well, the show moved on to the next date and Arkie was left behind until he was able to be returned to winter quarters; and in the spring he was able to return to the show. He and I would troupe together many times in the years that followed.

After the first indoor show in Wichita, Ace Donovan returned from whence he had come, and Bert Pettis worked the elephants for the rest of the dates. We went from Wichita to Detroit, Michigan, which was a three ring show, as were all of the rest of the dates. Two more herds of elephants, plus numerous horses from winter quarters, joined us, and Bert took one of the elephants from another act and added it to the one which we were working.

The rest of the dates went off without mishap and when they were over and I returned to my home in Scottsburg the floodwaters had subsided, the uninvited house guests had all departed. Things were back to normal, or as normal as they ever were.

CHAPTER 53 JACK DEMPSEY

In 1941 Mr. Terrell thought it would be a good idea if I could get Mr. Dempsey to accompany me sometimes to my broadcasts. Since Jack was working the concert on a percentage, he readily agreed.

In an effort to emulate the Ringling Bros. Circus, the Cole Bros. show also had a gaited horse number that season. Mr. Terrell had bought a beautiful gray, five-gaited horse named LeRose McAdams for his wife to ride in the show, but Mrs. Terrell had so many other duties in the office wagon that she seldom had the time to appear in the number.

Mr. Terrell thought that a good way to show off the horse, and also introduce Mr. Dempsey to the audience the first time, would be to have him ride the horse and lead the opening spec. He made his appearance in full Western regalia.



Jack Dempsey and Dorothy on the Cole show in 1941. Author's collection.

After we had made a few radio broadcasts together, we were having our breakfast in downtown restaurant one morning when he said, "You know, Dorothy, I just don't feel right riding that horse."

Now was my chance: "You don't look right, either. For one thing, you are not a cowboy movie star; you are riding a gaited horse with a Western saddle, and wearing an outfit that looks like you bought it at Montgomery Ward."

He burst out laughing, "Fact of the matter, I did!"

We were playing in a large city and when we had finished our coffee, I went with him to pick out a riding habit. Riding the horse, with an English saddle, he looked great.

He was fun to work with, and very big-hearted. I recall one day when I stopped at a drug store to buy a gift for one of the girls who was having a birthday, he went in with me. As we were getting out of the cab at the show grounds he handed me a large box. "Here, give your friend a little gift from me." It was a box of one of the leading brands of cosmetics; and this to a girl he did not even know.

CHAPTER 54 THE MANEGE CLUB WEEKLY NEWS

It started out rather like a joke. Somewhere down the line, in connection with my radio broadcasts, I had purchased a typewriter. The fact that I did not know how to use it in no way deterred my determination; I hunted and pecked, and I still do.

Anyway, the newspaper started out early in the 1941 season as a sort of report to the

members. It was very dull, so I asked the members to contribute little bits of gossip that might make it more interesting. Each member was required to buy a copy, whether they wanted it or not; the price was ten cents.

They liked the idea of the gossip column and soon other people on the show were asking to buy a copy. This posed a problem as the paper was processed in my stateroom on my typewriter; using two carbons I could print only three sheets at a time.

I called a meeting. It looked like our newspaper might be a money-making deal; however, I had neither the time nor the inclination to sit up half of the night making carbon copies. If the members agreed, we would take the money from our treasury and buy a mimeograph machine and print a real paper.

All of the members thought it was a great idea; so was born one of the few newspapers ever printed on a circus. It was a success from the start. We put a box with a slot in it on one of my trunks; anyone was at liberty to contribute any item of news they wished, but everything was carefully screened so that no one's feeling might be hurt. We assigned two girls as reporters to interview anyone who might be of interest, and two girls were assigned to advertising.

Emmett Kelly, the clown who was later to achieve much fame, was with the show and, knowing that he had been a cartoonist with a newspaper before joining the circus, I asked him if he would do the artwork for us. We made him an honorary member of our club, and he not only drew all of our headings, but also the ads and numerous cartoons as well.

The stencils were cut all during the week, from items as they came in. The ads were set up, and then came Friday. Right after dinner in the cookhouse, we returned to the dressing room; everyone in Aisle One closed their trunks and we went to work. As many sheets as we thought necessary were printed and placed on the first trunk; then on to page two, which was placed on the next trunk; and so on, through all of the stencils we had prepared. As soon as the last one was finished, two girls would gather the pages up, one by one, and take them to a girl who was waiting at the end of the line with a stapler, and she would staple the pages together. Two girls would be waiting, as newsboys, to go around the lot selling them.

All great fun, this . . . but we hadn't counted on the circus fans and others who became interested. We soon had such a large mailing list that the girl whose job it was had to have help handling it. Even the *Billboard* was one of our subscribers.

Gene Allen, one of the greatest elephant

women of all times, and also a leading horse woman, was in charge of advertising; she was a go-getter and kept our pages well supplied.

Many of the issues contained a column I wrote called "Did You Know." It contained such tidbits as: "Mrs. McFarland of the wardrobe department used to work bears, ponies, dogs and monkeys. Also used to train her own menage horses. Mitt Carl of the cookhouse was in the Army Air Corps for twenty-two months during the first world war, eighteen months were spent across the ocean. Mrs. Bigger, wife of the train master had an act of educated geese on the Ringling show. It was called the Barnyard Frolics. She trained the geese to be harnessed and pull little carts. Mr. Watts, assistant manager, was a sergeant-major of the 319th Aero Squad from 1917 to 1919. Wanda Wentz, elephant girl, was born on a steamship enroute to the U. S. from Poland. Tommy Comstock,



The final issue of the Menage Club Weekly News, the employee's publication on Cole in 1941. Pfening Archives.

calliope player used to play pipe organ in large theaters in Cleveland and Detroit. Harry MacFarland, equestrian director drove a forty horse hitch, Roman standing, on the Adam Forepaugh Circus. Harry Thomas, announcer, used to do a mind reading act in vau-dueville."

Our boss, Zack Terrell, was one of our strongest supporters, and he also contributed to the news. Having been a former newspaper man himself, he had a whimsical way of wording his articles. I could always tell when an item supplied by him showed up in our collection box.

Local newspapers in different towns thought that this was a clever idea and we received a lot of free publicity.

The feature of the concert on the Cole Bros. Circus that year was the world re-

nowned Jack Dempsey. He would referee a wrestling match between one of his men and a town wrestler. Since they did not use a concert in the Chicago Stadium, he joined the show later under canvas. As newspaper editor, it was my job to interview him; he gave us a nice story and offered to buy an ad as well.

CHAPTER 55 EQUIPMENT

Did I use special equipment? The answer is "Yes." My sidesaddles were always made by Martin & Martin in England. Early in the game we discovered that they would have to be reinforced due to the beating they might have to take. If a horse fell over backwards, or fell during the jumps, the horn would often be broken.

Martin & Martin saddles, even then, were not easy to come by and cost quite a lot of money. There was a saddle shop in New York City where we would send a newly-purchased sidesaddle and they would dismantle it and replace the wooden parts with steel, which would then be recovered with leather. Because I rode barelegged, this caused a problem: the constant rubbing against the leather saddle horn would make

per satin and when rubbing against other objects it was like sitting on a cake of soap; with the toweling, I did not slip.

At first, when wearing evening gowns to ride in, I thought it necessary to wear high heel shoes. Someone ought to have had my head examined. After turned ankles, and other related mishaps, I learned to wear heelless slippers, and soft leather boots with a rubber sole. For both sidesaddle and astride I always taped the bottom on my stirrups with friction tape. The foot does not slip, and stays in place. When riding jumps sidesaddle, I used a breakaway stirrup, so that if the horse were to fall with me I had a chance to get away from him.

When doing dressage, I found that the pressure of the legs was of as much importance as the spur. The use of bit and spur is what makes a horse respond and bring forth whichever leg is required of him, but if a rider is able to communicate with him using the pressure of the legs only, and reserving the spur for the times that he fails to respond, he or she will have a more willing mount.

When riding astride, I like to use a small English saddle. I like to be able to *feel* my horse under me, so the less leather, the better I liked it.



my leg so very sore that one time it swelled up, became infected, and I had to have it lanced. This friction was finally eliminated by lining the underside of the horn with sheepskin, which was not only soft to the flesh, but stayed dry when one became hot and sweaty.

With the stunts that I was doing, the girths that came with the saddles were not enough to keep them from slipping; I used an extra safety girth on each horse. In order not to discomfort the horse with the saddles perhaps moving, I had very heavy underpads made. I always used saddle covers on both the astride and the sidesaddles. They were made of a very light canvas, but the seats were of white toweling. The reason for this was that I often wore costumes made of slip-

Dorothy in a sulky ready for spec on Cole in 1941. Pfening Archives.

CHAPTER 56 LEWIS BROS. CIRCUS

Mr. Zack Terrell had told me when I left the Cole Bros. Circus that I would be welcome back at any time, but I had made such a big to-do about making it on my own, my pride would not permit me to eat crow.

I remembered one time when Paul Lewis and his wife Mae were visiting on one of the indoor shows that he had remarked, "If you ever find yourself at loose ends for any reason, we would love to have you join us. We are not one of the big ones, but we run a nice clean show and you would be one of the family."

What better time to give it a try? In the spring of 1942 I called him on the phone and he said, "Great! Come on!"

I told him then that I did not have a truck.

"Well, I do, and it will be on its way early in the morning. I will send Smitty, who I consider my very best driver and, since it is such a very long way, I will let his buddy go with him to keep him awake."

Smitty, I found out later, was not only a truck driver but Lewis' elephant handler and wild animal man as well. His buddy named Harry. He was the show's mechanic. Smitty was not only big—he was on the heavy side, while Harry was tall and skinny. Smitty was jolly and laughing most of the time; Harry seldom, if ever, smiled. I likened them to Laurel and Hardy, which wasn't too far-fetched, as subsequent events were later to prove.

The Lewis' winter quarters was located on a large farm; later I will go into how they happened to obtain it. The main house was a large rambling old farm house with a caretaker's house off to one side and, behind it, numerous barns and outbuildings. At one time, it had been a breeding farm for horses and the stables were well equipped. It made an ideal circus winter quarters.

They heard me coming and met me at the door. Mae showed me to my quarters at once, saying that she knew I must be exhausted after my long drive and would be wanting to freshen up before stopping to chat which could wait until later. They dined early, dinner would be at six; that gave me a little better than an hour. The apartment was upstairs, and I found it delightful. I had never lived in a circus owner's home before and they, in turn, had never had a live-in performer. True to their word, I was welcomed as one of the family, and loved working with them.

Later on, after dinner that evening, they told me that I would need a house trailer to live in while on the road; Mae would go with me to pick one out. My horses would ride in one of their trucks and I would pull the house trailer with my car.

I was used to a stateroom on the train, however, and I did not recall ever being inside a house trailer. Certainly I had seen them around winter quarters, and Harry LeRoy's people had them, but I had never been invited into one. I found one that appealed to me. Since I was alone, I did not think I needed a very big one. It had a nice bed in the rear and a dinette in the front that could also be made into a bed, a tiny kitchen, and a shower. If I had had any idea of how long this was to be my home, believe me, I would have bought a much larger one.

But, to get back to Paul and this big farm with barns and outbuildings enough to house a whole show. The story, as Paul told it to me, goes like this: His show was about to close and they had no place to winter it that year. He contacted his brother, who was a

lawyer in Jackson, Michigan, and asked him to try to find a suitable place. His brother had found a vacant piece of property and bought it for cash.

In due time, the show closed, retired to the new quarters and parked itself there for the winter. Paul's brother, not being in the circus business, was unaware of the commotion an outfit like this could cause. This vacant lot was in the center of a community of upper class residences. The residents were up in arms--this mess would have to move.

First they tried to buy Paul out, but he would not move, as he had no other place to go. Then they took him to court and pointed out that he was within the city limits. His brother, who, of course, was defending him, pointed out to the court that the zoo was also within the city limits. Paul's brother concluded his plea with the announcement that he would gladly see that they moved, if someone could come up with another place for them to stay. The land owners united and found this lovely farm, which they bought and traded him for his lot in town. They footed the bill for the difference, just to get rid of him and his roaring lions, trumpeting elephants and yapping dogs.

The transition from a railroad show to a truck show was in no way as difficult as I had expected it would be. Pat Valdo had always said, "When you leave the big one, you are only camping out."

It was a matter of luck, however, that the Lewis show was the one that I happened to go with. Everything ran very smoothly; they had a perfect system. I did not realize this, never having been on a truck show, until much later when I traveled with other ones.

The jumps were short and we seldom traveled at night. Very early in the morning, the concession stand would serve either doughnuts or sweet rolls and plenty of coffee to the working crew before they left for the next town. It would then pack up and follow them. The cookhouse truck always left after the evening meal and would already be there and set up. This arrangement let the equipment get there and be mostly set up before we arrived.

Later, the performers with their house trailers would start out, with Mae Lewis in the lead. Paul drove his car and brought up the rear so that he could take care of the bills after we had gassed up. Just ahead of him was the truck with the show's mechanic, Harry, and, with him, a man whose duty it was to change tires if anyone had a flat. Those who liked to eat out would usually stop somewhere along the way for breakfast.

Upon arriving at the lot you were directed to the spot that was to be yours for the stay. The show's electrician would come around and connect you to lights; it was up to you to see that your water tank was filled up at the gas stations. There was a water wagon, but that was for the animals and the cookhouse.

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This newspaper ad used by Lewis Bros. Circus in 1942 pictured Dorothy. Pfening Archives.

There was a six-piece band with the show. They did not have a house trailer, and preferred to stay in motels. They dressed in a small tent which was put up for them each day. They shared an automobile with a luggage trailer behind it in which they carried their instruments and personal baggage.

The show was presented in three rings, with either one act in the center or with the two end rings working in unison. The only time all three worked simultaneously was during the swing ladder and web numbers.

The track, while not too long, was adequate for me to do the waltz and rear and the high fire jump. All in all, it was a pleasing show and well received.

Mae ran the office wagon, kept the books, sold the tickets and was paymaster. Paul ran

the show and did the announcing. It was a perfect set up. Since the concessions were let out on a percentage basis, they did not have to bother with them.

I have heard some horse trainers say that they did not much care about working liberty horses because they were so unpredictable; with one horse you were in control, with a ring full of horses, you never could be sure what might happen.

I truly enjoyed working liberty horses. I was first taught to do so by Rudy Rudynoff on the John Robinson Circus. Then, when I joined the Ringling Bros. Circus, I worked under the direction of Tex Elmlund, also a great liberty horse trainer. He would often call upon me to assist him when he was breaking new stock in winter quarters. After going with the Cole Bros. Circus, I worked an act that had been trained by Jorgen Christiansen. Now I was anxious to try my hand at breaking a liberty act. I had, by this time, trained gaited horses, dressage horses and, of course, jumpers.

My chance came when I joined the Lewis Bros. Circus. I offered the idea to Paul Lewis and he said, "Of course, give it a try." What was there to lose?

In those days there was always a lot of help in winter quarters and they had very little to do. I owe the success of the liberty horse act to the wonderful outside help that I had; with special thanks to Smitty, the elephant trainer, and Harry, who was also an excellent animal man.

I used just six horses, but they were fast and they were good. When Mr. Lewis came to the barn and saw the act, he was very impressed and ordered beautiful trappings for them. Since there is no act like this one on the road at the present time, I would like to take a moment or two to describe it.

The horses would first circle the ring, reverse, then walk the ring curb with their front feet, after which the first horse would cut back, then the second, and so on, until they were all going the wrong way of the ring. They then would change back all at the same time, going the right way of the ring. Next, they would come up by twos, then sixes for the wheel; after that they would go into the double waltz, and then line up.

After starting off this time, they would now come up by threes; the first three would slow down and the last three would pass them, after which they, in turn, would do the same thing. After they did this a few times they would again line up and three of them were then removed from the ring. The three who were left would then do the *Ta Ra Boom Ta Ray*, which is take three steps forward and rear up on the hind legs.

For the finale, one of the other horses would do a spinning rear, then run for the ring curb, place his front feet on it and shake his head up and down for a bow.

Mae Lewis had all but retired from the

performance end of the business, but there was one act in the show for which she was obliged to leave the office wagon momentarily for each show, and that was the chow dog act. She, in conjunction with a man who subsequently left the show, had broke the act and no one else was able to work it. They were a vicious lot of dogs, ready to tear each other to bits and, since there were twelve of them in the act, a number of handlers were involved; but they were beautiful and the act was good, so Mr. Lewis felt that it was worth the trouble it caused.

The caretaker on the Lewis' farm had five children: three boys and two girls. The lads were perfectly content to stay on the farm and help their dad till the land and raise crops, but the two girls were very anxious to try their hand at being in show business. They were rather comely girls, in a homespun sort of way, but certainly not adaptable for working in the air, and air acts were the only show-owned production numbers. They were both hard workers and would be a big asset in helping to care for the stock, but they wanted to be in the show.

This dilemma was solved by letting them work the angora goat act. They called the act "The Farmer's Daughters and Their Pets." Never was there a goat act that received so much care and attention. Once each week the goats were bathed and they were brushed twice daily; their hooves and horns were brilliantly gilded. The act itself was quite a pleasing number, and when it was presented at the fairs later on in the season, it made a big hit with farmers who "didn't know them critters were so smart."

Smitty was one of the hardest workers I had ever encountered. True, I was not familiar with the mechanism of a small truck show, still it seemed to me that he had more to do than one man should rightly be expected to handle. He not only saw to it that the big top got up and down, spotted all of the trucks and trailers, drove a truck over the road, but also worked the lion act and the elephants, and made himself generally useful while we were under canvas in the spring.

Then came the fair season where we worked in front of the grandstand. After the poles and the riggings for the aerial acts had been raised, and the ring curbs and props were set, Smitty had little to do. Since they did not use the lion act on the fair unit, he had only the elephant act to work.

His partial vacation was short-lived, however. The closing number of the Lewis Bros. Circus on the fairs was the *Funny Ford*, lots of firecrackers and tomfoolery. After the first fair date, which lasted three days, the men with the comedy car left the show. Since it was a necessary part of the unit, Paul dispatched Smitty, posthaste, back to his winter quarters where an old "funny car" which he owned had been gathering dust for years. Harry went with Smitty and they load



Paul Lewis, owner of Lewis Bros. Circus. Pfening Archives.

ed the car on a flatbed truck and brought it back. Harry went to work on it at once and got it in working order. I doubt if either Harry or Smitty would have been in such a hurry if they had had any idea of what was in store for them.

Paul went to an army surplus store and bought a soldier uniform for Smitty that was too small; one for Harry that was several sizes too large, and informed them that they were to put on the act. Our flat tire changer, Snakes, would be the hidden driver, lying on his belly and driving it from underneath (the car was supposedly running about by itself).

One of the three clowns with the show attempted to show Harry and Smitty how to put on makeup, while Paul coached them as to how the routine was supposed to go. But when they got in front of the grandstand they forgot the instructions completely. Neither of them was quite sure where they were supposed to be at any given time. They kept bumping into each other and became quite upset about it. To top it off, it made Smitty mad to hear the people laughing at them. He shook his fist at Paul, who was doing the announcing, and told him to make them stop. Meantime, Snakes, crouched below in the car, got confused and drove the car into place where it was not supposed to be, and the whole thing was hilarious. When Smitty could stand the laughter no longer, he threw his hat on the ground and jumped up and down on it while we all roared.

Paul was pleased as punch because the act was really funny; but not to Smitty and Harry. They flatly refused to go out there and be laughed at again until Paul offered each of them a big raise, then they didn't mind it any more.

The aerial acts were adequate, with lovely Jean Evans, sister-in-law of the great Clyde

Beatty, holding down the feature spot. The liberty horse act came up to expectations; Black Hawk, King Kong, and Rex, all seasoned veterans, held up their end, and it was a well balanced show. For me who, up until now, had had such a hectic career, it was like a paid vacation. I went the whole season without getting hurt or going to the hospital once.

I had gone to Scottsburg to spend the Christmas holidays with my mother. On my way back to winter quarters I had to change trains in Chicago. There were a couple of hours layover so, on an impulse, I called one of the largest booking offices there; they asked me where I was and what I had been doing. One of their agents asked me if I could stay over and catch a later train; he would like very much to talk to me and thought it might be advantageous to all concerned. I phoned Paul, who was to meet my train when I arrived in Jackson, and told him what I was up to. He told me to stay as long as necessary and see what might be in the offing, and to keep in constant touch.

Over dinner with the agent that night, he outlined what his office would be able to do for us, and I promised to meet him the next day with an answer. Paul was waiting by the phone for my call; he was delighted and told me to go right ahead, and he thought he might have a surprise for me when I got back there.

I stayed in Chicago for several days. The agent booked us into a string of indoor shows, which were in entirely different places than those which Orrin Davenport played, so all of our acts, including mine, would be new to them.

When Paul discovered that I was able to book the big indoor shows, he was very happy; help was becoming hard to get, and gas rationing was also a problem. This booking would eliminate the need for a big top and all of the extra help needed to keep a tent show going.

He made me a proposition: he would furnish all of the help, the transportation, and his stock; I would do the booking and work my acts along with his liberty horse act; and we would split the profits after expenses. It was a very liberal deal as far as I was concerned. While they were getting things ready I went back to Chicago and booked a string of fairs.

The indoor shows which we were now working differed from the Orrin Davenport dates in that he hired all of his acts and they made a complete circuit with the show, running much the same at each date. This agency booked the acts for each show separately, so the program was different each time and you worked with a variety of people.

We were working the Police Circus in St. Louis with the Lewis liberty horse act, their pony drill, Mae's dog act and, of course, my dressage horse, Black Hawk; the waltzing

and rearing horse, King Kong; and Rex, my high jumper. The elephant, seal, and goat acts had been left in winter quarters, since they were not strong enough acts to play the big indoor shows. We would pick them up when we got ready to play fairs. Paul had sold the lion act; it had become too much of a hassle putting up and taking down the steel arena with the shortage of help.

Jinx Hogland also had his horses and riders booked for this date. Besides his "push ball" on horseback and drill team, he also had several high school horses and a number of jumping horses. His riders were to jump first, and I would finish the number with the high fire jump.

When I inspected the track I could see at once that we were in for trouble. Dirt had been packed into the rings and around the track for several feet, and they then covered the entire floor with sawdust. It was impossible to judge where the dirt ended and the cement started unless you were on foot.

I went to Jinx and told him what I thought. He did not wish to make a complaint, but suggested that I do so. Since he had twelve jumping horses and I had only one, I thought it was his place to point out the hazard. The result was that neither of us did anything.

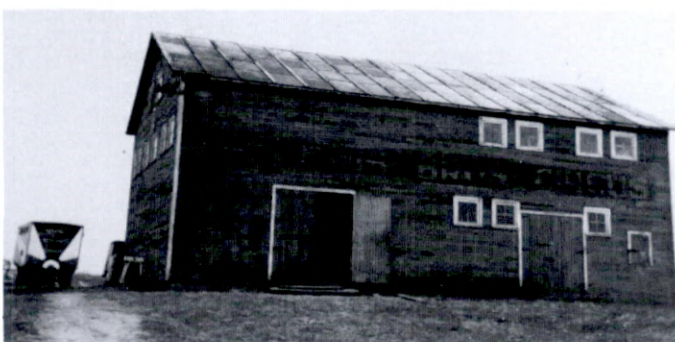
Strobe light effects are obtained by materials being treated with some sort of chemical which, when the house was darkened and a special spotlight used, glowed in the dark. It was new at that time. The idea was for Jinx's riders to wear costumes of this material and, at the finale of the quadrille, all of the lights would go out and a spectacular sight resulted. Of course, everyone was anxious to see it.

Bad luck seemed to pursue Jinx at this show: first the "push ball on horseback" number had to be eliminated. It required the removal and replacement of all of the ring curbs and many of the props, as a great deal of space was required to present the number. It took up too much time.

The costumes for the strobe light number did not get finished in time for the first show, but they went on with the quadrille anyway. A stranger sight you could not imagine: when the lights went out, you saw hats floating in the air, also gauntlets, pants, bridle reins, and the bandages on the horses' legs. That was all. Everything else was blacked out. Wow!

The high school act, in which Jinx had six horses; along with me riding Black Hawk in the center ring, went off without mishap.

The flying act was over, the nets were dropped, and now it was time for the closing act--the jumping horses. The first show was chaos;



The big barn at the Lewis winter quarters in Jackson, Michigan in 1943. Pfening Archives.

horses slipped and fell all over the place. If they went a little too wide, they hit the loose dirt and lost their footing, or, after slipping, balked when they hit the hurdle. I could see that most of the trouble was at the corners where the horses were swinging out too far and falling.

My act called for me to go over the back jump with my hands in the air. The front hurdle would be set on fire as I pulled down the blindfold, and Rex would jump the hurdle of fire--no way would that work on this track.

Quickly I coached my groom; he would go with me to the far end of the track, leading my horse. This would keep the ever nervous Rex quiet, having Jimmy by his head. I would NOT take the back jump. The moment they made the announcement and I saw that the fire was lit, we would go over that. I knew Rex would head straight for it and not swerve onto the concrete. Smitty, who was standing by the hurdle ready to light it, sensed my intention and lit the hurdle almost before the announcer was finished. Backstage, they were busy rushing Jinx's injured riders to the hospital. This is how I first met Genie. She and her father were part of Jinx's troop, and her father was one of the riders that had been hurt. (Before the next show they placed extra seats all around the track,

Mae Lewis and her trained goats in the Lewis' quarters. Pfening Archives.



and stretched a rope in front of them, giving the horses something to guide them.)

Several days later I went with Genie to the hospital to visit her dad. He had a broken arm and also a broken leg; when he was released from the hospital he was laid up for some time. He was very concerned about his daughter; her mother had passed away, and as long as he was with her, it was fine; but he did not like the idea of her traveling around without someone to look out for her. He wanted to know if there was some way I might take her with me. I told him that I would talk it over with the Lewises.

My trailer was small, but it had a bed in the back and a dinette in the front that made into a bed. I would be glad to have company while driving overland. Our next indoor date was Chicago, which Jinx was also playing; after that we would go into winter quarters for a while. Genie and I shared a hotel room while in Chicago, and we had a chance to become better acquainted. She was a beautiful girl, with a disposition to match; coal black, naturally curly hair, big brown eyes; and she was a little taller and just a little heavier than I.

Since it had been my idea to hire Genie, it was now up to me to find something for her to do. I had trained a couple of the horses out of the liberty horse act for manege. I could put her in that number along with another rider, and with Black Hawk, make a nice, three ring display; but that was not much for her to do. On the larger fairs, which we were now playing, we used only the animal acts, so anything in the air was out.

Then I had an idea: if it was all right with Paul and Mae, I would put together a vaulting act, something like the one that Tex and I had trained on the Ringling Bros. Circus, only this time there would be two riders. I talked it over with the Lewises and they thought the idea was great. Mae said that she would be glad to be the ringmaster.

We used three of the horses from the liberty act. I would enter the ring on two horses, Roman standing. Genie would jump up behind me and do several tricks with me holding her; she would step outside the ring, and I would then jump the two horses over a hurdle. These two would leave the ring and a single horse with a surcingle would come in. A surcingle is a belt or girth that passes around the belly of a horse and over the blanket, pack, saddle, etc., and is buckled on the horse's back. Now we completed a series where she and I were vaulting and splitting



A newly painted Bailey Bros. Circus truck in the Lewis winter quarters in March of 1944. Pfening Archives.

the neck, climaxing the round with Genie doing the drag . . . laying across the horse's back with her foot in a loop, she picked up flags as he ran around the ring. Then I would do a couple of stand up tricks. We would finish with the forward rollover and cart-wheel, similar to May Wirth's finish, only we would alternate--first one and then the other.

What we lacked in talent we made up for in enthusiasm. This projected to the audience, who seemed to enjoy the number and responded warmly.

Playing fairs was fun. Between shows we would leave the infield and wander around the fairgrounds looking at the exhibits and the livestock, after which we would have dinner. (Breakfast and lunch we fixed in the trailer.) We soon found that the ladies from the local churches put out the best meals. Sometimes we would stop on the midway and play a few games of Bingo. Then, back to the infield for the night show, after which we would have a light snack in the trailer and go to bed. At some of the fairs they would have a fireworks display after the show and, of course, we always stayed up to watch it.

On days when there were no shows, Mae would take Genie and me to town with her where we would do our shopping and then take in a picture show, after which we would meet Paul and have dinner at a nice restaurant. It was a pleasant season for all of us.

When the season ended and we went into winter quarters, I went home to be with Mother for the Christmas holidays, and Genie left to visit her father. While there, the Ringling Bros. Circus contacted her and she joined their show. We had made plans to be together the next season and I wish that she had stayed with me a little longer as there were so many things I had hoped to teach her. As it was, they expected too much from her and she was not yet ready for it.

Upon my arrival back at winter quarters, Mae had a nice surprise for me; while I was gone she had had my bedroom and bath completely done over, everything in pink, white and gold.

Mae was one of the best cooks I ever knew. It is a wonder that I did not gain pounds and pounds, but, of course, I was very active. She had fixed a very special welcome home dinner for me, and when it was over and we were having coffee in the living room, they told me the news.

In January 1944 Paul Lewis sold his trucks, stock and equipment to Big Bob Stevens. Stevens leased the Jackson winter quarters and framed his new show there called Bailey Bros.

An agreement had been made for me to have the concert (after show) on Bailey Bros. I would continue to work for Paul Lewis doing the liberty horse act in the big show and my own acts would be the concert feature. I would receive a salary for working the liberty act, and the concert would be a percentage deal. It would be up to me to hire my own people and run the performance myself.

I knew of a family in Canada who were able to put on almost a whole show by themselves. I contacted them and got them under contract. I then hired a couple I knew who called themselves "The Shooting Stars." She shot at different objects he held, and then they did an impalement act in which he threw swords around her. *Here was a couple who had to get along!* With my acts, we had a strong concert. The show was a success and our concert did a big business. I was making money.

One evening, just before the night show, a taxi pulled into the back of the lot and my mother stepped out. She had a awful lot of baggage with her, so it did not look like she was there for a short visit. We managed to cram all of her things into my car and trailer, and then I had to rush off to work the show.

When the show was over, she told me that she had come to stay as she was tired of being home all by herself. She had sold the house and everything in it. I was upset because there were lots of my things that I had left there that I would have like to have kept. She had also sold her car and my horse trailer.

Traveling with a truck show is quite different than with a railroad show. Mother had come to visit me at times when I was with the Ringling Bros. Circus, staying for a week or so and enjoying herself immensely. On a railroad show you could retire when the show was over, wake in the next town, and expect three good meals to await you each day at the lot. On a truck show you had to get up early, have a cup of coffee, and drive to the next town. Along with working your acts and keeping your things put away, you had to find time to fix yourself some sort of meal

in your trailer. Added to this was the fact that I had to check the concert ticket sellers in and out, then go to the main office and turn the money over to them and wait for it to be checked; thus making me quite late getting through at night.

I had turned my bed over to Mother; my dinette bed had to be made up before we could eat, and then made into a bed at night. Mother was used to retiring early and I would have to turn on the lights to get undressed and put things away before I could retire. No matter how quiet I tried to be, I would wake Mother up; then she would be unable to go back to sleep.

Shortly thereafter, the show started to have some long jumps which required night driving; this we had never had before. With the little sleep that I was able to get and as hard as I was working, I became very tired, nervous and, I am afraid, downright nasty.

It became harder and harder for me to try to keep up with the rest of the outfit. Sometimes I would get to the lot just in time to make the show, so I would have to rush to work the liberty act in the show, plus two concert announcements, and then work the after show.

They did not carry a cookhouse, so it was either unhook the trailer and go somewhere to eat, or try to fix something in the crowded little trailer. My mother was unhappy and kept wishing she could go back to her lovely home in Scottsburg, but, of course, this was out of the question. We no longer owned it.

To top it all off, Mother and the Lewises did not get along together at all. Since I was working for them, they expected me to carry out their orders. Mother, naturally, thought her needs ought to come first. This resulted in arguments.

Finally I told Paul that I was sorry, but I was going to have to leave. He said that he understood and wanted me to know that we would still be friends, and we remained so. I agreed to stay long enough to teach Mae to work the liberty horses, and the people that I had hired for the concert would be able to continue with it.

And, now, I was worried sick, wondering where to go, what to do. There could be no turning back. I had made a choice and must stick with it. I made arrangements to stable my horses at the fairgrounds in the town where I left the show, and rented an extra stall so that Jimmy would have a place to put his cot.

Just before I left the show, Bob Stevens, who was in partnership with Mr. Lewis, came to talk to me; he told me that he would be taking out a show by himself the coming season. As long as I was working for Mr. Lewis he could not try to hire me, but now that I was leaving he would make me a proposition.

He was in contact with a man who had agreed to break a liberty horse act and a couple of high school horses for him. He

wanted me to go to Texas and help the man select the horses and, when they were trained to work the liberty act on his show, along with my own horses. I told him I would think it over.

I went to say goodbye to Paul and Mae. We parted, still good friends. I cried as I drove away from the lot and in the rearview mirror I could see Mae wiping her eyes, also.

Mother and I went to a trailer camp and



Dorothy Herbert on Bailey Bros. Circus in 1944. Pfening Archives.

stayed for a few days. I caught up with the laundry, got the trailer cleaned up, and had a little rest. Of course, I went to the fairgrounds each day to see that Jimmy and the horses had everything they needed.

Well, I was going to have to do something, I could not just sit there. I found out where the Bailey Bros. Circus was playing and managed to get Mr. Davenport on the phone. I told him I had no place to go and asked if I might send my horses to his winter quarters. He said that it would be all right, so I hired a truck, loaded my horses, trunks, saddles, and Jimmy, and sent them on to Gonzales, Texas. They would be secure there until I could find out where I was going to light.

Where to now? I had a little money put away as I had been doing very well with the concert . . . but I had no gas coupons. The show had arranged to fill up all of the trucks and carried all of the stamps. I am sure that they would have given me some if I had thought to ask, but I was so upset when I left I had forgotten to mention it.

I explained my position to a few of the

people around the fairgrounds and the trailer park and, one way or another, I was able to buy some on the black market, but they were not cheap.

Since it did not matter much where we went, I settled for Houston, Texas. I figured that if I could get in touch with some of the Shrine members someone would remember me from playing their indoor shows and help me get some gas stamps.

I pulled into a trailer camp on the outskirts of town, freshened up, unhooked the trailer, and went into town to make some contacts. It took quite some time to find someone who was able to help me, so it was late when I got back to the trailer, and Mother was already asleep. I, too, was tired, but before going to bed I went to the phone and called Gonzales to see if the horses and Jimmy had arrived and were all right. The night watchman assured me they were all okay, so I went to bed for some much-needed rest.

CHAPTER 57 MY SHOW

Frankly and truthfully, I do not know quite what was the matter with me. I had had a nice season with the Bailey Bros. Circus until leaving and I had enjoyed myself; this ought to have been enough. But I had a feeling that I was not getting ahead. Ahead of what, I wonder?

It had been drilled into my head for so many years when I was with the Ringling Bros. Circus, that each year I must have a new act and something far more sensational than the last. I firmly believed this to be true. Nothing else mattered so much as this; it was the only way to stay on top, so they had told me. On top of what?

Here I had spent a whole season on the Cole Bros. Circus doing high school, waltz and rear, high fire jump, and the Big Hitch, but nothing new. What a fool I was! Many performers do the same acts year after year and manage to keep right on going. All of the coaching I had been subjected to had made a very deep impression on me, I am sorry to say. I must get ahead!

When the season ended, Mr. Terrell invited me to return for the coming season. I thanked them for all past favors and told them that I thought it was time for me to try something else. I was sure I could play fairs and rodeos.

I had my horses sent home to Scottsburg and proceeded to try to break the new act which I had devised. Perhaps with different horses it would have been feasible, but with mine, and only Jimmy for a ringmaster, it was a total disaster. For the benefit of anyone who, by chance, might be looking for an unusual act to attempt, I will briefly outline how the routine was supposed to go.

A trapeze is hung over one side of the ring, just high enough so that a rider, when

standing on a horse, can grab it when going under it; she then performs a trick on the trapeze. Meanwhile, the horse continues to canter around the ring, she drops to the horse as he passes under her and does a stunt on him; back to her feet and up again to the trapeze-off and on, up and down. It was wild, it was hectic, and I damn near killed myself!

I cannot help but wonder if things might not have been a great deal different if I had had someone to advise me. I was always so busy breaking and presenting that I never had the time to learn the business end of show business.

Faced with the realization that my inspiration had been a failure, and the fact that there were people and animals depending on me to feed them, I was going to have to use what resources I had on hand to do so.

I called Orrin Davenport and asked if there was still time to fit me into the indoor shows. I am sure he considered me a pain in the neck, but was too much of a gentleman to say so. He did ask why I hadn't waited until the first overture was playing before contacting him. Anyway, I was welcome.

But after the indoor shows, what? I would cross that bridge when I came to it . . . unless someone blew it up before I got to it. I was at loose ends and could not make up my mind what I would do.

Why, I did not know, but in my life so many things just seemed to happen for no reason. It was while I was in this frame of mind that I was approached by Harry LeRoy during the Cleveland Shrine show. He may have been what they call a "high pitch-man," an expression I was to learn about later. He spun a grand tale of how he and I, together, could put out our own show and with the publicity I had obtained and his expertise, make a lot of money. Lest you think me gullible, please keep in mind that up until then I had never seen a "mud show;" I had been too busy with my own affairs. He read off a list of figures from some of his past enterprises, and the profits from the concessions alone were staggering. All right, you say, then why did he need me? I asked the same thing.

"In order to have concessions, you need to have a show." That made sense. "Also," said he, "you have to have a title. With your name and my know-how, we can make a real go of it."

I took the bait.

We had arranged that he would send a truck to pick up my horses and trunks at the closing date which, that year, was in Detroit. I had a friend bring my car from Scottsburg; I would drive it and follow the truck to Texas.

Harry had told me that he intended to buy the equipment from a large truck show that was converting to a railroad circus. I assumed that he must have quite a sum of money to do this. He had a show of his own on the road, but it was small and, at the present, playing in schoolhouses. I was to

meet him in Gonzales, Texas, where the trucks which he was buying were stored.

Harry's truck arrived a day late, and I was far from impressed when it did. The driver explained that he had had engine trouble. I wondered not only how it would stand the trip back to Texas, but how it had gotten this far to start with. I was glad that the rest of the acts had left and that there was no one around to note my departure.

Since Harry had told me that he had to get back to his show, I could only assume that all of his good motor equipment was being used at those dates and that this was an old truck that had been stored away in case of emergency.

When I drove into the winter quarters of the Dailey Bros. Circus in Gonzales, one of the first persons I met was Ben Davenport, the owner. I told him why I was there.

"So you are Harry LeRoy's new partner," said he. "My condolences. Harry and I were once partners, a long time ago." He did not elaborate. Then with true Texas hospitality, he invited me to have my stock unloaded and said we could stay there for a few days.

It was his understanding that Harry had rented an empty field somewhere down the road but, since no tents or anything else had yet been put on it, there would be no place to keep my horses except tied to the side of the truck. And if old Harry were running true to form, it was doubtful if water or anything else had been arranged for. In the meantime, he would like for me to meet his wife, and I could check into the hotel in town later. I found his wife Eva to be a delightful person and she made me feel welcome at once, which I sorely needed at that point.

Two days later, Harry came trotting in, with his mincing little steps and lame excuses, to which no one listened, as to why he had been delayed. With his arrival, we moved to our own winter quarters, which was merely an old hay field where he had some worn out tents erected.

Since there was little that I could do there at the moment, I spent a great deal of time with Eva Davenport, and she attempted to teach me the ins and outs of running a small tent show in a few easy lessons; knowledge that had taken her a lifetime to learn. I was very grateful, and she knew it.

Now it was time to look over the trucks and equipment that Harry had been negotiating to buy. I was pleasantly surprised; all of it was nice and clean and in good shape. The truck's light plant, etc. had all been gone over and was in running order. The tent and seats, while not new, could be repaired with little trouble. For the first time, I became encouraged and enthusiastic: this show could be a winner after all!

I did not have any doubts until it came to

sign the contracts for the equipment, trucks, tents, etc. It was then that I learned, for the first time, that everything was being bought on the cuff, with me as co-signer of the note, thus making us both liable for the payments.

When Harry had talked to me in Cleveland, he had stated that he was buying a truck show. He needed someone to run it and put on the performance and furnish some of the acts while he went ahead and handled the advance. He had suggested a partnership, nothing had ever been said about a joint ownership.



Harry LeRoy and Dorothy Herbert planned their own show for the 1945 season. Pfening Archives.

Our agreement had been that we would use my name and my stock and we would split any profits there might be after all of the expenses and the salaries had been paid. It did not include buying a circus *on time*. I had no interest at all in owning a show, either alone or with someone else.

I went to Mr. Davenport. "I am afraid," I confided. "I have my home and my horses and I do not wish to take a chance of maybe losing them for a deal like this."

"Very well, then," he advised, "tell him to assume ownership of the show and to pay you a percentage of the take, with no partnership involved, and be sure that you do not sign anything whatsoever."

Harry reminded me of a bantam rooster, he was always in a hurry. When he breezed in, there were always a million questions I wanted to ask him, but he was too busy to ever listen, or answer, if he heard.

He did have a lot of followers, "drifters," he called them. A cook tent was set up, and then the paint started to fly. Things were beginning to look a little more promising.

It had been agreed that I would manage the show and Harry would run the advance. This was his job on the various shows that he had been with. He was the most nervous person that I had ever been around. I do not

recall ever seeing him sit down, except to eat, and then he would gulp his food down in a hurry and start pacing about again.

One day, Mr. Davenport arrived at our makeshift winter quarters and presented me with a half truck load of "paper," lithographs, window plaques, etc. "All you have to do is cross-line them, put your title on, and you have your advertising." This was a real big help, as those things cost quite a bit of money.

We were all set to go: acts had been hired; the side show was ready; we would move to the opening spot, which was just fifty miles away, a day ahead of time to get things set up for the first time.

I had stayed behind to make sure that nothing was left, making me much later than the rest, so when I arrived in the town where we were to have our grand opening, I expected all of the natives to be aware of our coming. No one I asked could tell me where the show was setting up, they had heard nothing about it at all. In desperation, I called the police station.

The officer in charge told me that there had been some sort of commotion on the outskirts of town; some people were trying to set up some tents in a farmer's field. When they failed to remove their trucks when he ordered them off of his property, he had called the police. As I drove up, there was still a heated argument in progress.

"Yes," the farmer agreed, "some feller had been by to see him and offered to rent the south end of the field, but he had also agreed to pay the rent on it in advance, and he had not been by to do so. And he had also said that he would send some men to clear off the knee high weeds so that a tent could be erected; he had not done that, either."

Thereupon, one of the policemen who had been standing by now informed me that no street parking was allowed and, since no one had rented any space or made arrangements for cars to be parked, the likelihood of people walking for many blocks to see a show was a remote possibility.

I was beside myself and then, to add to my frustration, I was informed that no license had been issued, or even applied for. To top it all off, not one piece of paper had been posted anywhere.

Just then Harry drove up. The back of his truck was loaded with pre-popped popcorn and a couple of dirty kids, who were to have the job of sacking and selling it. The concession man had not shown up. Of course I blew my top!

Harry explained he had been unable to get a sponsor, so he was going to play the town "cold" for a tryout. I told him that was where he was going to be--out in the cold; I had had enough.

Although he had been gone for over a



week, he had not had time to put up any paper or arrange for the spot for the tents. He chose this impractical time to inform me that he was out of money, hence no license; I would have to come up with the money to get the show open.

"But, don't worry," he hastened to add, "I have been working on this guy and I think I have him about to buy a half interest in my new show. I showed him the equipment and he was very impressed. I will be able to collect a nice hunk of cash from him; everything will be just great and we will make a lot of dough. In the meantime, how about some pocket money for me?"

The newly repaired and freshly painted trucks and equipment did look good, and I did not doubt that he was about to rope a sucker in to buy a half interest in "my new show." Only it wasn't his to start with; so far the only thing that he had put down on it was conversation.

I went to the nearest telephone and called Ben Davenport. I hated to do so, knowing that he must be having troubles of his own just opening up a railroad show. But, of course, he had all of his old experienced people with him. He told me to sit tight, that he would be there. He had several men with him when he arrived. He took complete charge.

Harry's dogs, ponies, props, etc. were still

Ben Davenport's big elephant herd in the Dailey Bros. Circus winter quarters in Gonzales, Texas, in 1945. Pfening Archives.

loaded in his original animal truck, which was parked behind a filling station with one of its tires flat. My horses and paraphernalia were in one of the Dailey Bros. freshly painted horse semi trucks, proclaiming to the world that the great Dorothy Herbert & Harry LeRoy Bros. Circus had arrived, or that it was passing through their city. It was parked on the "No Parking Allowed" street, along with the truck containing the single elephant leased from the Davenports, (rather than the large herd depicted on its sides) right behind it.

A policeman kept pacing back and forth, trying to decide if he ought to give everyone a ticket or forego it, as they seemed to be in enough hot water as it was. The other six trucks, consisting of ticket wagon, canvas truck, seat truck, concession wagon, light plant, and prop truck, were in a row behind the elephant truck.

Harry's cookhouse truck, which belonged to him personally, had pulled onto the lot, and the cook, who was one of Harry's regulars and no doubt used to his eccentricities, was calmly handing out twice-perked coffee to the roustabouts hanging around to see what might transpire.

So far, the only acts, other than mine, that had been engaged were those who normally worked for Harry; we had planned to start out small and add to the show later. Ben disposed of them first: since they had been working schoolhouse shows to start with, it would be advisable for them to continue to do so.

That left the working crew. Ben called these men together and told them he had jobs for them on his show. Nothing had been unloaded as yet, so he would have the truck drivers take the equipment back to Gonzales. He had two extra drivers with him in case they were needed. He then invited me to take my horses and equipment to his winter quarters and stay there until I could make my arrangements as to where I would go.

I was sorry that we had not been able to give even a few shows, just to see how it would have gone over, but Ben assured me that it was a lost cause and would never have made it. He spoke from experience where Harry was concerned.

I sat around the almost deserted winter quarters for a few days, trying to make up my mind what to do next. I certainly would not contact either the Ringling Bros. or the Cole Bros. shows, I was so ashamed of my failure. Now I doubt very much if they ever even heard of it, or would have cared if they did.

CIRCUS REPORT

PUBLISHED EVERY WEEK BY DON MARCKS, 525 OAK ST., EL CERRITO, CA 94530-3699. SUBSCRIPTION RATES PER YEAR: U. S. DELIVERY \$30; CANADA AND MEXICO \$40; OVERSEAS SURFACE MAIL \$45; AIRMAIL \$85.

Collector urgently seeking old wild west posters, route cards, heralds, and any other paper concerning Buffalo Bill Cody, Pawnee Bill, Miller Bros. 101 Ranch, Tiger Bill, Tom Mix Circus, and any other wild west show.

Also seeking any material concerning western movie star appearances with the circus (Tom Mix, Hoot Gibson, Tim McCoy, Ken Maynard, Buck Jones, Hopalong Cassidy, Jack Hoxie, Reb Russell, Harry Carey, Lone Ranger, etc.

Will purchase one piece or large collection. Please advise us of your material. We are seeking other wild west material collectors for trading and correspondence. We have many rare circus posters and movie posters for trade or sale.

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ONLY BIG SHOW COMING

Chapter 6 Part Two

By Orin C. King

A Grand Autochthonic Collection

1884

Cooper, Jackson & Co.'s Great International Allied Shows went into winter quarters in the autumn of 1883 at Valley Falls, and emerged in the spring as The Great New York & New England Menagerie, Museum, Circus, Caravan, Hippodrome and Bicycle Riding Association and Double Ring Shows, but the name of Cooper, Jackson & Company was in constant association with the new title.

The Valley Falls *New Era* carried an ad on April 17 announcing the opening of the season of 1884 on April 26 in Valley Falls. The ad was identical to that used repeatedly the previous season by Cooper-Jackson. Lotie Aymar, Willie Aymar, Miss Kitty Staaks, Leopold and Wentworth, Miller Theala, Guthereg and Brown and the Zunett Children were all together again.

Mentioned in the advertisement, also, was Bolivar, the mighty war elephant, but Bolivar failed to appear. The *New Era*, May 1, reported the story under the heading of "The Dead Elephant." When the murder of Bolivar occurred is unknown, but it happened sometime between early April and the 26th. It cannot be assumed that Bolivar was still living when the first advertisement appeared, April 17, for the show continued to promote Bolivar as late as the Howard date, June 11.

From the Valley Falls *New Era*, May 1:
"THE DEAD ELEPHANT."

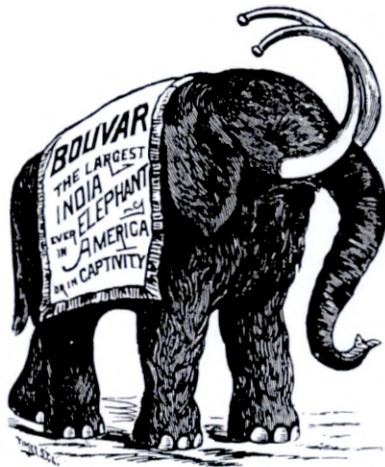
"Cooper, Jackson & Co.'s big elephant, Bolivar, is dead. It will be remembered that he manifested a very untractable disposition some time ago when they undertook to put him in training for the season's tour, and had to be chained down and whipped, a wagon load or two of young saplings being used up on him, but apparently with no good results. The efforts to conquer him were continued, but that same sullen, stubborn disposition which has always been characteristic of him seemed to be unconquerable, and the efforts, which had to be exceedingly harsh, to subdue him resulted in the rupture of a blood vessel from the effects of which he died in a short time. He was such a massive brute that to dig one hole large enough to bury him in was found to be altogether out of the question, and he was dissected and interred by sections.

"It will be remembered that this same elephant got loose up in Dakota some years ago

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and was at large for eight days, and killed two or three men in their attempts to capture him. He might have been running loose yet but for the deterous and courageous Alexander Mervine, who has been his keeper ever

N. Y. & New England Menagerie Circus



MUSEUM, CARAVAN & HIPPODROME.
Bicycle Riding Association and Double Ring Shows.
At Sedan, Monday, June 9th. At Longton, Tuesday, June 10th.
At Howard, Wednesday, June 11.
At Fredonia, Thursday, June 12. At Needlesha, Friday, June 13.
A. MAMMOTH MENAGERIE!

BOLIVAR, the mighty elephant, SATISFACTION through hoops of fire! BRILLIANT, the champion jumping horse, that leaps over four of his companions and a seven foot gate, at a single bound. PLAYS, the educated pony, that does everything but talk. LOTIE, Aymar, the queen of all lady riders and the only one on earth that rides blind is known as the "trailing act." This is something entirely new and an act that no one ever saw performed before, and the manager of this exhibition, pay her more glory than any five performers get in America. Miss Kitty Staaks, the world renowned, in her wonderful bareback principle act. Willie Aymar, in his champion bare back jumping act. Leopold and Wentworth, the gymnasts, in their own triple-barred double trapeze act. Gustafson and Brown, who are acrobats, in their wonderful and wonderful feats that any two performers on earth in their great leap to land between act and a host of others. In the museum department will be seen some of the strangest and most wonderful people in the world. The only three children. Pip, the wild boy, the tattooed lady, who has suffered and endured the painful process of being tattooed from the top of her head to the sole of her foot. And the three-headed angstroms. We exhibit runs on alone and show everything we advertise. For particulars see small bills. Free admission taken place daily.

ONE TICKET ADMITS TO ALL!

Admission: Adults 50 Cents. Children under 9 years of age 25 Cents. Don't Forget the Day and Date at Howard.

Don't Fail to See the Grand Parade!

The N. Y. and New England Menagerie Circus continued to advertise Bolivar in Howard, Kansas even though the elephant was dead. Kansas State Historical Society.

since, and who in the last struggle with the animal was determined to conquer or kill. He

did the latter, and perhaps it was the best thing that could have been done, for he was really a dangerous animal."

A few days later (May 5), the *Topeka State Journal* ran a story about "Bolivar's Bones."

"Major Wm. Sims, of the state agricultural bureau, has an elephant on his hands, and the old trouble of getting rid of the beast is his. Bolivar, a famous old pachyderm, was beaten to death at Valley Falls a few days ago, on account of viciousness, and as there was no means at hand by which he could be buried in whole, he was quartered and thus put under the daisies. A suggestion that the skeleton be put together and placed in the museum under charge of Major Sims, has set that gentleman on the search of some way by which this can be done and a consultation with Gov. Click about the matter, was held this morning. The skeleton of a big elephant in the museum, would be a big feather in Major Sims' cap, and the probabilities are that the huge carcass, will soon loom up in the west wing of the capitol."

If the museum did, indeed, acquire Bolivar, the Kansas Historical Society cannot find the bones today.

Among the Kansas dates played by the New York & New England were the following: April 26, Valley Falls, season opener; April 29, Holton; April 30, Wetmore; May 6, Leonardville; May 7, Clay Center; May 14, Bull's City; May 17, Hays City; May 20, Larned; May 21, St. John; May 22, Great Bend; May 29, Kingman; May 30, Harper; May 31, Anthony; June 4, Arkansas City; June 9, Sedan; June 10, Longton; June 11, Howard; June 12, Fredonia; June 13, Needlesha.

"All of the principal actors of Cooper & Jackson's circus have arrived and are stopping at the Hillyer house," the *New Era* reported on the 24th of April.

The Valley Falls *Register* received a visit from Ed L. Brannan, general agent, on the 24th. The *Review* on the 25th, reported the arrival of W. B. Aymar, "equestrian manager" on the preceeding Sunday, and the arrival of Willie Aymar "the latter part of last week." The *Review* considered Willie Aymar "a boss fellow and one of the most graceful riders now before the public." The Quinnett family "four in number," arrived on Tuesday the 22nd.

The *New Era* reported that the show "gave two very good performances here last Saturday afternoon and evening. Under the circumstances, the parade which took place about 11 o'clock, was very creditable. Both performances were well attended and greatly enjoyed." The special "circumstances" was never explained.

The *Holton Recorder*, speaking of the exhibitions, April 29, pointed out that, "It was only the third performance of the season, and take it all in all, everything connected with the show passed off smoothly."

"There was quite a mad dog scare in this city circus day," the *Recorder* reported in another column. "The rabid animal came into town from the south about two o'clock and the alarm was quickly raised. He bit several dogs--since shot and spotted to be killed--several cattle, attacked several children, but did not succeed in biting them, but a canvasman belonging to the circus was bit on the boot leg, was immediately transformed into the best actor in that outfit. The dog was followed up and killed. What damage he perpetrated elsewhere, or where he came from, or who he belonged to, we could not learn."

In a fashion typical of the times the *Recorder* ran the initial story but failed to follow up on the results.

May 6, circus day in Leonardville, was a reminder to the *Monitor* that "if we were incorporated as a city we might put quite a little sum in to the city treasury as a license fee." The *Monitor* also realized that if the town was incorporated, a judge could have raised a tidy amount as gambling fines.

Two issues of the *Monitor* prior to show day carried an ad for the circus. Handouts were only one liners.

"The New York and New England circus, museum and menagerie shows more every day for nothing outside than one half the traveling exhibitions show on the inside.

"Everybody come to town May 6th to see the grand balloon ascension, free to everybody.

"It gives you two weeks to hunt around and get yourself a girl to take to the circus, May 6th at Leonardville."

After the show had come and gone, the *Monitor* had some comments of its own.

"Suckers bit well on the streets show day.

"One or two fights are reported for show day.

"Some bad blood was manifest on the street Tuesday, and some of it got spilled.

"Several parties were swindled out of various sums of money by the street gamblers last Tuesday. You can't beat a confidence man at his own game. Better show your good sense by giving him a wide berth.

"The show Tuesday, though not a large one, had some very good features. The managers were gentlemanly and obliging, and the circus performances were fully up to the average and presented some interesting orig-

inal features. The trapeze performances were especially good, and the fetes (sic) of their india rubber man were unsurpassable."

The Bull's City *Western Empire*, for the exhibitions of May 14, published the following:

"The N. Y. and New England Circus exhibited here last night to a large attendance. The performing Elephant was the finest we



Equestrienne Lottie Aymar appeared in the New York & New England 1884 performance. Pfening Archives.

ever saw. Miss Lottie Aymar, the lady bareback rider was very fine. The managers show just what they represent. The show is first class in every respect.--Valley Falls *New Era*."

The same handout was used in the Larned *Chronoscope* giving credit to the *New Era*. The St. John *Advance* and Anthony *Republican* both ran the paragraph word for word as it appeared in the *Western Empire* and the *Chronoscope* with one slight difference--the credit was given to the Clay Center *Dispatch*. Valley Falls or Clay Center--the important thing was that Ed Brannan made a score.

The founding father of Bull's City was "General" Bull who, with two of his employees, was gored to death by his pet elk (c. 1879).

The Hays City exhibitions of May 17, were proclaimed by the *German-American Advocate* to be "a decided success and those who attended got their money's worth. The riding was very fine, the acrobats equalled any in the country, the jokes of the clown were original and amusing, while the street display and array of horses was well worth seeing."

By the time the New York and New England played Larned, May 20, the show had been on the road for nearly a month, but the much advertised 118-125 year old mighty war elephant, Bolivar, who stood twelve feet at the shoulder, had not yet been seen by any patron.

The *Chronoscope*, Larned, noted the absence of Bolivar and inquired.

"The circus men say that in crossing the Smokey river the water was up to the wagon boxes and their elephant 'Bolivar' being very old and ugly, refused to come. They expect to have him meet them at Great Bend. Pretty good excuse. The papers in the eastern part of the state have had considerable to say concerning this poor Bolivar. One statement is that his keeper being unable to keep him under control beat him to death. Another says he was 125 years old and died of old age, while another gives this reason: 'They had white-washed Bolivar as a sacred white elephant, and while in a street parade a shower came up, washing him off, from the effect of which he took cold and died.' Poor Bolivar."

May 21 was a glorious day in the history of St. John, Kansas, for on that day the New York and New England became the first circus ever to exhibit in that town. The advertisement which appeared in the *Advance*, May 15, moved the editor to comment with emotion that, "St. John has arisen to the dignity of a circus, a genuine circus and menagerie."

One giant step for mankind!

The *Advance* reviewed the show the day after the exhibitions.

"The New York & New England show exhibited at this place yesterday as per announcement. The circus was fair, but the menagerie was very, very thin. Taking the show as a whole, compared to other traveling arrangements which infest the west, it was a colossal success. It was the first show that ever exhibited in this county, and was quite a treat to many of the youth of the county. It was not expected to compare favorably with the great railroad shows, and was as good as the common run of wagon shows. The usual number of gamblers was on hand and ye editor takes pride in the fact that he was instrumental in stopping their nefarious games in the street."

One of the fakirs who ran a soap swindle at St. John was "jerked"--arrested--in Great Bend, and according to the *Advance*, "to prove his generosity, promptly presented them with \$200.00 for the benefit of the school fund."

Editors and reporters of the 1880s were loosely tethered to the facts and through gullibility, laziness or unadorned stupidity made great assumptions based on the slightest truth. Editor John C. Foley was an outstanding assumer and proved that he could leap

farther toward a conclusion than any other journalist in Kansas.

On May 23, Foley published in the *Kingman Courier* an attack on the New York and New England, based entirely on heresay and surmise. The show was due to exhibit in Kingman, May 29.

The headlines of Foley's story proclaimed:

"A SNIDE CIRCUS

**A Grand Aggregation of Fraud and
Deception that is soon to Visit
this city.**

**Following in its Wake is the most Complete
and Varied Assortment of Thugs,
Thieves and Pick-pockets ever
Exhibited.**

Let the People not be Decoyed from their
Homes for they are Certain to be
Plundered in their Absence."

From this point, Foley proceeded in great form with the utmost righteousness.

"Kingman is soon to have a circus. From all the information that can be gleaned by this paper, at this time, it is a circus only in name. It travels in the disguise of a show that its minions may realize greater profits in a less laudable vocation. It is billed in all the colors of the rainbow, but the bills are by far the best part of the show. There is scarcely one single feature that it advertises that it is able to perform. It has neither museum nor menagerie. What few horses the concern is possessed of are a lot of old broken down stage horses procured in the west. Its performers are, with few exceptions, from the most immoral variety theaters of Denver and the mining regions of Colorado."

A couple of paragraphs farther down the column, Foley related the misfortune of the town of St. John.

"Wednesday last they exhibited at St. John, Stafford county, and the town was thronged with roughs, bummers and confidence men. The people not knowing the character of the performance turned out en masse. In nearly every instance where a house was found to be left without an occupant, in town or country, it was entered and the greater part of its most valuable contents was stolen."

Foley was gracious enough to admit that perhaps the proprietors did not sanction the thievery or share in the loot, "but enough is known to strongly suspect it."

Toward the end of Foley's diatribe he proved his claim as a World Class Conclusion Jumper with the following:

"Keep everything under lock and key and let the shotgun be well loaded and convenient. As far as patronage is concerned, the affair deserves and should receive none. Every man, woman and child who contributes a single cent to their coffers becomes a party to their fraud, deception and dishonesty. If they can not be suppressed by the lawfully constituted authorities, the general

public should enforce their disbandment by denying them patronage."

Foley was annoyed by an advertising scheme he attributed to Cooper and Jackson's New York and New England. Some one had apparently contracted with Kingman merchants to publish an advertising sheet in conjunction with the show's exhibitions. Two thousand sheets were to be distributed Saturday, the 17th, and two thousand more on show day. Foley proclaimed, May 23, that, "Not a single bill was distributed in this

**LOOK OUT! THE
New York & New England Menagerie**

**MUSEUM, CIRCUS, CARAVAN, HIPPODROME,
Bicycle Riding Association And Double Ring Shows.**



Will Exhibit at Walnut City Monday May 19th

with a brand new show, and new and startling features.

Free balloon ascension and Daylight Fire Works.

Grand street Parade at 10 o'clock a. m.

Over 200 horses, 160 men, 50 star performers.

Lottie Ayman, the Queen of all Lively Riders, and the only lady on earth that rides what is known as the Trotting Act. This is something entirely new, and an act that no one ever saw performed before, and the managers of this exhibition pay her more salary than any fine performer get in America.

Miss Killy Starka, the world renowned, in her wonderful bare-back principle act.

Willie Ayman, in his Champion bare-back summerault act.

Leopold & Wentworth, the gymnasts, in their new and original tripple-bar acts.

Miller Theak, the Human Fly.

The Zanetti children, in their wonderful trapeze act.

Outberg & Brown, who accomplish more daring and wonderful feats than any two performers on earth, in their great head to head balance act and host of others.

IN THE MUSEUM DEPARTMENT

Will be seen some of the strangest and most wonderful people in the world. The only Astor children. Zip, the wild boy. The Tattooed Lady who has suffered and endured the painful process of being tattooed from the top of her head to the soles of her feet. And the three-headed songstress.

WE EXHIBIT RAIN OR SHINE and

SHOW EVERYTHING WE ADVERTISE.

ONE TICKET ADMITS TO ALL.

Don't forget day and date, Monday, May 19, 1884.

Many circuses advertised a "Zazel" the cannon lady. The New York & New England was one of them in 1884. Kansas State Historical Society.

city last Saturday." To Foley it was not competition, but thievery.

Foley was not yet finished with the New York and New England, for on page 5, May 23, he took a final shot at the showmen.

"It is a pity that the first circus to visit Kingman should be great and immense only in one particular--that of being a huge swindle, a sell, a gigantic fraud and an aggregation of all that is dissolute and disreputable."

Perhaps, Foley meant that it was a pity that the first circus to visit Kingman did not spend one cent for advertising in Foley's alleged newspaper for the exhibitions of May 29.

In the *Courier*, May 30, Foley swallowed his words.

"Yesterday's Show.

"Wednesday evening, Messrs. Cooper & Jackson, proprietors of the New York & New England Circus, called upon the editor of the *Courier* in relation to the severe dressing down that show received in the last issue of this paper. He found them very courteous gentlemen, mild-mannered and reasonable, which, considering they had a grievance, was hardly to be expected. They furnish ample proof that their enterprise is not identical with the outfit that left Colorado last month. Their circus wintered at Valley Falls, this state. Whatever depredations have been committed in their wake, they assert that they are not responsible for and are ever anxious to assist the authorities in locating the perpetrators of such crimes. They very cordially tendered the *Courier* management the usual courtesies accorded to the press, which, under the circumstances, were declined. In their exhibition here they were unfortunate in more ways than one. It seemed as if the elements had conspired with the *Courier* to do them injury. One of the heaviest rains of the season was prevailing yesterday morning about the time the crowd should have begun to gather, and very few people ventured in from the country. Nevertheless a very creditable street parade was given and those who visited the arena pronounce it a show well worthy of being seen. The next time the gentlemen come this way with their circus the *Courier* will be prepared to speak more kindly of them, their business, and their people, than it did in this instance."

The ghost of Bolivar generated a bit of gambling that Foley did not condemn, and which was reported in the *Courier* on the 30th.

"Yesterday's circus had a very warm supporter in the person of Jim Hutchins. Jim knew the circus must be a good one because the *Courier* favored it with an adverse notice, and he was willing to back his opinions with his boodle. Wednesday evening one of the boys aggravated James somewhat and succeeded in getting a bet of five dollars out of him that the show of yesterday had no elephant. In the drenching rain during the morning he was out early seeking the quadruped with a tail at both ends. Along the streets, and through the alleys, and behind barns did he search, until some persons remarked that a young man who had as much ability as the *Courier* credited Jim with, ought to have sense enough to stay in out of the wet. At length he descried a rotund figure in the distance, slowly plodding along the street. With a cry of joy he sprang forward to get a better view. He was confident it was the elephant, but it proved a disappointment. It was nothing more than George E. Filley on his way to the office. It cost Jim just five dollars not to see the elephant."

On the 29th, the St. John *Advance* responded to Foley's attack on the New York and New England.

"While we agree with the *Courier* that the show is simply a colossal aggregation of gamblers, we must admit that the circus so far as it goes is pretty good. But as far as the houses of any of our citizens being entered and robbed during the stay of the circus, or before, or after its departure, we have no hesitancy in branding as false, and the *Courier's* informant is wonderfully mistaken. The reading of the above in the *Courier* is the first intimation we had of such a thing, and there can be no doubt about it being a mistake."

Cooper-Jackson exhibited in Harper, Friday, May 30, followed, Monday, June 2, by Pullman-Mack. On June 3, five days after the New York and New England, Kingman was played by Pullman, Mack & Company.

"WAIT FOR THE BIG SHOW!" the New York & New England proclaimed for its exhibitions of June 4, in Arkansas City. The opposition was Pullman, Mack & Company, which played the town on May 28.

Sudan saw the New York and New England on June 9. The bitterness engendered by the show was strongly expressed in the *Chautauqua Journal*, Sedan, after the show had come and gone.

"Cooper, Jackson & Co's circus exhibited at this place Monday last to a large crowd, the performance being very fair, but the men who sold lemonade and reserved seat tickets were a set of thieves and robbers and in making change, succeeded in stealing amounts ranging from one dollar up to fifteen, from a number of our citizens from both town and country. The crowd was considerably worked up over the matter, and had it not been for the number of women and children in the show at night, it is more than likely that the canvas and fixtures, as well as a few of the rogues, would have been considerably demoralized before the completion of the evening's entertainment."

In another column the *Journal* reported that, "The favorites of Cooper, Jackson & Co's. circus, first Miss Lottie Aymar, Master Wm. Aymar, Miss Nannie Quintete and Miss Sinclair. The acts performed by these parties are simply wonderful, and they could not be excelled, the entire show giving satisfaction. Dr. S. E. Wheeler being an old acquaintance of the parties above mentioned enjoyed a very pleasant visit from them. A number of beautifully arranged bouquets (sic) were presented the parties above named."

Ed L. Brannan was in Howard ahead of the show arranging advertising, posting bills and contracting for services and supplies for the exhibitions June 11.

The Howard *Courant* described Brannan as, "the most gentlemanly circus agent we ever saw, and is entirely free from the brag, bluster and slang that generally characterizes

the circus man. It is a pleasure to do business with such a man."

"The circus last Wednesday," the *Courant* reported, following show day, "was well attended and was pronounced a very good show. The managers acted perfectly white in all their business dealings, so far as we have heard, and the performers did good work in the ring. The thinnest items on the programme were the clowns and the lemonade."

Behold the Conquering Hero Comes.

MAIN & CO.'S
CONSOLIDATED WITH
PULLMAN & MACK'S
EIGHT GRAND
United Mastodon Shows.



Pullman & Mack's New York Circus and Main & Co.'s Monster Menagerie.

One Museum of Living Wonders.
A Grand School of Educated Animals, including Horses, Ponies, Dogs, Monkeys, Elephants, &c. &c.
Our Grand Congress of Novelties, including rare and exclusive specialties from every land and clime.
The Wonderful Three Headed Songstress, a living lady with three distinct heads and one body.
The Only Arctic Aquarium.

GRAND FREE STREET PARADE
of Sparkling Splendor every day at 10 a. m., which is well worth going fifty miles to see.

Remember the Day and Date.
Oswego, Kans., Monday, May 19!

The Main & Co.'s Pullman and Mack show used this ad in Oswego, Kansas in 1884. Kansas State Historical Society.

The New York and New England played Howard following Mlle. Corinne's Circus which exhibited there on June 2 and 3. All that is known of this show is one paragraph in the *Courant*, June 6.

"Mlle. Corinne's circus was in Howard several days of last week, waiting for the Chicago Comedy Company to get through showing so they could have a chance at the public. Monday and Tuesday evenings they showed to very liberal though unappreciative audiences. Their street music consists of a fife and two drums, all poorly played. they pulled out Wednesday morning."

A most unusual circumstance was reported by the *Courant* concerning the New York and New England appearance.

"A female in some way connected with or

at least following the circus, last Wednesday, set up a wheel of fortune or chuck-a-luck stand in our principal street, but was arrested by the Sheriff and fined by Judge Bowen--five and costs amounting to \$24.00. That was all right; she violated the law 'regulating' gambling, and ought to suffer. And we will hereafter expect to see all these snide soap peddlers, jewelry fakirs and fellows who sell five dollar bills for a dollar all arrested and treated with like liberality. Don't make a specialty of arresting women; its ungallant. Treat them all alike."

Main and Company's New United Mammoth Shows, Circus, Museum, Menagerie, Hippodrome and Universal Exposition of Living Wonders, played Chetopa, Wednesday, September 19, 1883, but there is no record of how they fared, but the reception must have been satisfactory, for in the week before Christmas, the show returned to Chetopa and established winter quarters.

The Chetopa *Advance*, December 27, reported that, "The circus of Main & Co. reached here last week, and has gone into winter quarters, and has rented from Mr. Coggins the old Drake hall building in which to keep their animals, outfit &c." The above information is exceedingly skimpy but nothing more issued from Chetopa until late in April, and the news at that time as greatly confusing.

Allen Sells, retired from the circus business, was living in Topeka in 1884, when, on April 13, the Topeka *Commonwealth* reported that he "went to Chetopa yesterday on business."

On April 16, the Topeka *Daily Capital* reported, "Allen Sells returned from Chetopa yesterday, where he went to purchase a small circus which came to grief in that city."

The visit of Sells to Chetopa was ignored by the Chetopa *Advance*, and the Topeka papers made no further mention of the journey. It is doubtful that Sells made any investment in the unfortunate show, for his contract with his brothers specifically forbade him to engage in the circus business.

"The Hilliard circus, now wintering here and being put in shape to go on the road," according to the *Advance*, March 20, "was seized by the sheriff yesterday, under an order of attachment. Wm. Main has also asserted his rights under a chattel mortgage. It is understood that the claims for which action has been brought amount to about \$4,500. It was the intention of the proprietors to have the show on the road by April 1st. This proceeding will delay matters, at least for awhile."

The identity of Hilliard is a mystery, but possibly he purchased the show from William Main for on April 24, the *Advance* commented that, "Wm. Main has again taken an interest in the Hilliard circus."

Other news of the 24th, was the death of

"the long tailed monkey belonging to the Hilliard circus," and a note that "Sheriff Lampson was down Monday looking after his elephant and the other animals."

The solution to the financial problems of the show, the fate of Mr. Hilliard, and the ownership of the aggregation were ignored by the press and after April 24, nothing was reported concerning the show until an advertisement appeared in the *Advance*, May 15, announcing the exhibition at Chetopa, Saturday, May 17, beginning the season of 1884 for Pullman, Mack & Co.'s Eight Grand United Monster Shows. On the same page appeared a handout naming several performers.

"Among the arenic celebrities may be found Mr. Fred Barclay, the champion hurdle rider of the world; Mlle. Burdeau, the beautiful equestrienne, whose skill, grace and daring have no equal; five funny clowns, led by the veteran, Mr. Chas. Madden, who is a host within himself; Lathrop and Rosa Athleau; Miss Cordelia, the lady on the high wire; Mr. Harry Mack, with his troop of canine comedians and dog circus; the Brothers Carroll and Baldwin in their terrific leaps over elephants, camels, horses, etc.; the performance of trick horses, as well as the great elephant, Empress, the ground and lofty tumbling by the entire company, all combined, make this show far superior to any that ever appeared in this town. In addition to the above, as an extra inducement, in the museum department may be seen the marvelous three-headed songstress, engaged at an enormous salary, who will amuse and astonish the audience by singing in three separate voices all at one time. She has three natural heads on one body, and sings, talks and laughs. It astonishes and bewilders the most scientific. This one feature alone is worth double the price of admission that we charge to see all the combined shows, circus, museum and menagerie. The grand street display will take place at 10 o'clock in the morning of the day of exhibition, and remember we give on that day a grand free exhibition in the open air, consisting of a mid-air ascension. Come early, be in time, bring the little ones and make a grand holiday. It is free, free, free. Remember the day and date--Saturday, May 17th, 1884."

After the opening, the route included the following towns, some of which produced opposition from other shows, as noted below: May 19, Oswego; May 22, Neodesha; May 26, Grenola; May 27, Cedar Vale (day and date with Hunter's Consolidated); May 28, Arkansas City (Cooper-Jackson, June 4); June 2, Harper (Cooper-Jackson, May 30); June 3, Kingman (Cooper-Jackson, May 29); June 9, McPherson; June 10, Canton; June 11, Lindsborg; June 12, Salina; June 13, Solomon; June 14, Minneapolis.

For Oswego, May 19, the title was amended to read, "Main & Co.'s Consolidat-

WILL EXHIBIT AT CHETOPIA, Saturday, May 17th!

A GIANT AMONG ITS FELLOWS
PULLMAN, MACK & CO.'S
EIGHT GRAND UNITED
MONSTER SHOWS



CIRCUS, MENAGERIE MUSEUM & ELEVATED STAGE.

Coming! Coming! In all its Overwhelming Creation Reflecting Self, A Great Show for Little Money, A Perfect Cyclone of Astonishing Attractions, 5 Funny Clowns, led by the veteran CHAS. MADDEN, Bare-Back Riders, Male and Female, More Trick Horses and Comedians, More Novel Equestrian Feats and Daring Acts; More Terrific Leaps, and Mid-Air Performances, than any Show on Earth; and

THE GREATEST SENSATION OF THE AGE



THE THREE-HEADED LADY

A Living Human Being, with Three Well-Formed Heads, One of the Seven Wonders of the World, A LADY WITH HAIR SEVEN FEET LONG, A Grand Menagerie of Wild Animals, including "Empress," the Largest and Oldest Elephant in Captivity, Trained Dogs, Trained Goats, All kinds of Trained Animals

A Glittering, Glaring, STREET PROCESSION

Every Day at 10 A.M.—The Great Sensational and Never before Attempted Mid-Air Flight! FREE! FIRE! Wire Ascension from the Ground to the Unseen Top of the Canvass, Two Performances Daily, at 5 and 8 P.M. Doors open at 1 and 7 o'clock P.M.

One Ticket Admits to All the Combined Shows. Children Half Price.

Oswego, Monday, May 19th

The Main name was not mentioned in this ad used in Oswego. Kansas State Historical Society.

ed with Pullman & Macks Eight Grand United Mastodon Shows." At the top of the ad was the stirring announcement "BEHOLD THE CONQUERING HERO COMES!"

The Oswego *Independent* reported meagerly that, "At the afternoon performance the attendance was very light, but in the evening they had a large audience. The show gave very good satisfaction."

The Neosho *Register* disposed of the exhibitions at Neodesha, May 22, with the comment, "Only three fights on circus day."

May 27, at Cedar Vale, provided a dilemma for the ordinary circus goer, and a time of ecstasy and also torture for the truly addicted circus fan, for on that date two shows exhibited at the same time--day and date, as the circus puts it.

Pullman-Mack, which claimed to be "Posi-

tively the largest and best wagon show in the whole world," came face to face with Hunter's Consolidated Shows. Hunter made no grandiose claims and spent not a cent on newspaper advertising, but, using handbills, Hunter promised the public a good 25 cent show. The anxiety all belonged to Pullman-Mack and was so strong that included in their ad in the Cedar Vale *Star* was the following admonition:

"Owing to the fact that another small inferior show will also exhibit at Cedar Vale, Tuesday May 27th, 1884.

"We would say to the masses come to town early look at the two shows then judge for yourself and patronize only the biggest and best.

"We have twice as many people as the other show, twice as many horses and wagons, twice as good a show, twice as much canvas, twice as good a street parade, and our show is twice as big, and we ask you not to take our word for it, for you will say yourself after seeing the two shows side by side, and furthermore no first-class show has ever exhibited for less than 50 cents.

"Patronize the big show only, and remember the unalterable day and date.

"Cedar Vale, Tuesday, May 27th, 1884."

When all the excitement was over the *Star* commented that,

"No day in the history of Cedar Vale, has it been visited by more shows than on Tuesday of this week. Main & Co.'s and Hunter's circuses and menageries with their various side shows exhibiting all at once. The crowd on show day is estimated at 2,000 people. The day was unusually quiet considering the necessary excitement on such occasions. At the sight of the elephant Mode Johnson's team took fright and ran away, upset the buggy, and smashing things up considerably. The procession of either were good and far from being an index to that formed within the canvass (sic). Cedar Vale like other towns allowed the soap fakirs and street gamblers to operate and judging from the demonstrations of some of their victims who had lost their 5's and 10's that they did an unusual business thus demonstrating that 'the American people must be humbugged.'"

Pullman-Mack got to Arkansas City, May 28, just a week ahead of Cooper-Jackson's New York and New England. The *Arkansas Valley Democrat* found Pullman-Mack to be more creditable than anticipated and "the attendance was exceedingly large, and, taken as a whole, the show gave general satisfaction."

The two shows were in conflict again at Kingman, the New York & New England appearing May 29, and Pullman-Mack coming June 3.

The two-column ad of Pullman-Mack screamed "WAIT! WAIT! WAIT!" but failed to include the Pullman-Mack name. It was merely

"THE BIG SHOW

Not in Kingman Until
Tuesday, June 3rd."

Editor Foley of the *Courier* dealt more kindly with Pullman-Mack than he had with the Cooper-Jackson aggregation, devoting a column and half to reviewing the show.

After a lengthy preamble analyzing the crowd and displaying his literary genius with thumbnail descriptions of the types of people present on the streets of Kingman on show day, Foley finally got down to business and reported a few facts.

"The show was the circus and menagerie of Pullman, Mack & Co. It made the trip from Harper the previous night, but the last cages, together with the elephant and dromedaries, did not arrive until about noon. The grounds on the north side of Avenue A and west of Main street were occupied by the tents and during the morning were thronged by persons eager to inform themselves as to the precise manner in which circuses are established. The street parade, which took place about one o'clock, was as good as the average, and the public exhibition of ropewalking, given previous to the opening of the doors, is rarely excelled. The management was very negligent of the comfort of its patrons in keeping them waiting for admission an unusually long time, scorched by the rays of the mid-day sun and crushed in the dense throng that crowded for entrance. If the delay in opening up was for the purpose of giving pick-pockets a chance of plying their vocation, it did not bring about the desired result, for not a single instance of such depredations has been brought to the attention of this paper. The display of animals in the menagerie was neither large nor varied, yet the collection was good, quite entertaining and well worth the admission price. In the museum there was a three headed lady to be seen, but the 'wonder' was nothing more than optical illusion brought about the use of mirrors. The circus was no better and no worse than the usual performance of the kind, beginning with the 'grand pageant' and winding up with the performance of the young lady with thin legs and brief skirts, so adept in pointing one foot toward high noon while the other retains its position at six o'clock. The same old clown with the same dull jokes, the same idiotic ring master, generously giving the laugh to the crowd, the same superannuated equines, tumblers, rope dancers and humble 'supes' that have been the chief feature of all circuses from the first origin of the amusement, were in attendance. Old men could gaze and in each trick recall pleasant memories of their boyhood when just such a performance was enacted beneath just such a tent and before just such an audience.

"NOTES OF THE DAY

"Kingman county is fully two thousand dollars poorer by the advent of the circus.

"Merchants who looked forward to show

day expecting to do a thriving trade were disappointed. People from the country seldom combine business with pleasure.

"H. C. McCamant was fortunate enough to secure the cake-basket at the concert.

"The treasurer of the concern not knowing well what to do with the immense pile of currency left in his hands by the day's entertain-

CIRCUS AT NORTON

FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 1884

HUNTER'S
Grand, Consolidated
Circus, Menagerie and
Roman Hippodrome.

WILLEXHIBIT AT NORTON
On Friday, June 27 1884.

DON'T FAIL TO SEE IT.

Be in time to witness the Grand Street
and Balloon and High Wire As-
cension, which are free to all.

Dont forget the date, JUNE 27, 1884.

The Hunter show used this plain ad in Norton, Kansas in 1884. Kansas State Historical Society.

ment, sought exchange at the various banks to make it more convenient to carry.

"The fakirs were out in full force and plied their nefarious practices with varying success. The amounts out of which they inveigled the verdant were almost invariably small and insignificant. No complaints were made to the authorities, each fellow, foolish enough to get bit, seeming anxious to conceal his humiliation.

"The elephant was of good size and a fair performer. No gentler beast of the species ever traveled. The boys stood around her, handled her trunk, felt of her tail and even pinched her ears without any fear of molestation. She wasn't dead, neither did she sleep, but she was kind and docile.

"The procession did not make its appearance until nearly three hours after the usual time. The drive from Harper was a long one and it was asserted that some of the horses had been drugged by an emissary of a rival show at that town, some of them becoming so sick that travel was rendered difficult.

"About noon one of the fakirs worked the

soap racket to perfection on a farmer of this county who is old enough to have more wisdom. He was invited by the accomplished dispenser of soap to purchase the package for the neat sum of ten dollars. After invoicing his pile he said he had only nine dollars, and therefore could not invest. One of the cappers at length kindly offered to go in with him, the ten dollars were paid and the packages were delivered. Greatly to his disappointment the rural gentleman discovered that the boxes instead of containing \$20, as he supposed, enclosed nothing more valuable than common air. Bursting into tears he announced that he had staked his last dollar and lost, and he earnestly besought the fakir to give him back at least a part of his money. Members of the sporting fraternity are generous roosters but they are in the habit of parting with money only when they have to. They think it's not lucky. This one, of course refused, and still blubbering the farmer rejoined, 'If I had won I would have given you your money back.' This remark seemed very amusing for the crowd cheered lustily."

The McPherson *Freeman*, speaking of the exhibitions of Monday, June 9, stated that, "The circus was on an average with all circuses. One thing can be said of this show, and that is the proprietors are perfect gentlemen, from the advance agent Mr. W. I. Mann, who made friends wherever he went, down to the ticket taker. They done (sic) all they could for the comfort of their patrons and very kindly answered all questions, and gave all the information they could to those who were seeking knowledge. As a whole they gave very good satisfaction. The show was free from pickpockets, gamblers and three card monte men which usually travel with shows."

Thursday, June 12, the show played Salina. The *Saline County Journal* remarked that, "Pullman, Mack & Co.'s circus gave two very fair performances, notwithstanding the rough 'overland' appearance of its 'traps.' We have seen circuses far more pretentious which gave poorer performances. The attendance was good both afternoon and evening. The heat in the afternoon was terrible, and the audience seemed nearly exhausted with their frantic attempts to keep comfortable."

The Hunter show that so brazenly played day and date against Pullman, Mack & Company at Cedar Vale, May 27, was one of two shows of the brothers Charles and John Hunter. Hunter's Consolidated Shows. The show that competed at Cedar Vale, was a small mud show. Hunter's Railroad Shows was a very small show riding the rails on an unknown number of cars. Both shows wintered at Pittsburg, Kansas.

The brothers maintained in Pittsburg an amphitheater seating 2,000, which was the center of all commercial entertainment in the city, serving as winter quarters for the two

circuses and as an opera house for traveling dramatic and musical companies.

The *Pittsburg Smelter*, March 22, ran a story on the Hunters, illustrated with a half page rather fanciful interpretation of the brothers' Amphitheater.

The *Smelter* reported that, "This Amphitheater is the Winter home of Chas. & J. Hunter's shows. They winter all their stock here, and employ constantly thirty-six men in caring for them. They spend between \$7,000 and \$8,000 in the town ever Winter. They keep two shows on the road during the season. One, a railroad show starts out on the 1st of April; and the other, a wagon show, on the 15th of May. The firm have about \$20,000 capital invested in the business."

The 26th of May Hunter's Consolidated Shows exhibited at Sedan. Since the show did not advertise in the newspapers the *Chautauqua Journal*, Sedan, felt free to be insulting and commented, "Hunter's consolidated humbug show will exhibit at Sedan next Monday."

The *Journal*, after the show had come and gone, mentioned that, "Quite a large crowd was in town Monday, as it was circus day." Hunter employed the tactics of arena shows of a hundred years later and did not carry a band. Every crossroads township in 1884 had a brass band, and the *Journal* reported, "Several of our local boys were employed to play for the circus at this place, Monday."

The next day, at Cedar Vale, music was again supplied by the Sedan Cornet band, and the *Star* commented, "They are hard to bear." The *Sedan Journal* quoted the musicians as saying that in Cedar Vale, "They had a splendid time."

The *Southern Kansas Gazette*, Augusta, was not impressed with the exhibitions of May 31, and dismissed the show in one sentence.

"A good many people came to town last Saturday, to see the circus, but as it was another one-horse affair, devoid of merit, there was a general disappointment."

A higher level of excitement was generated in Leon for the exhibitions of June 2, since Hunter was the first circus ever to play the town. Like its counterparts in the big cities of Kansas, the *Leon Indicator* felt compelled to warn its readers.

"We predict there will be a big crowd in Leon next Monday, to witness the first arrival of a circus in town. It will be well for our city authorities and everybody else, to be on the alert, as there are too often camp follow-

ers of a disreputable character in the vicinity of big gatherings. No gambling devices should be allowed."

Hunter ran a short paragraph of advertising in the *Indicator* buried in the local news column.

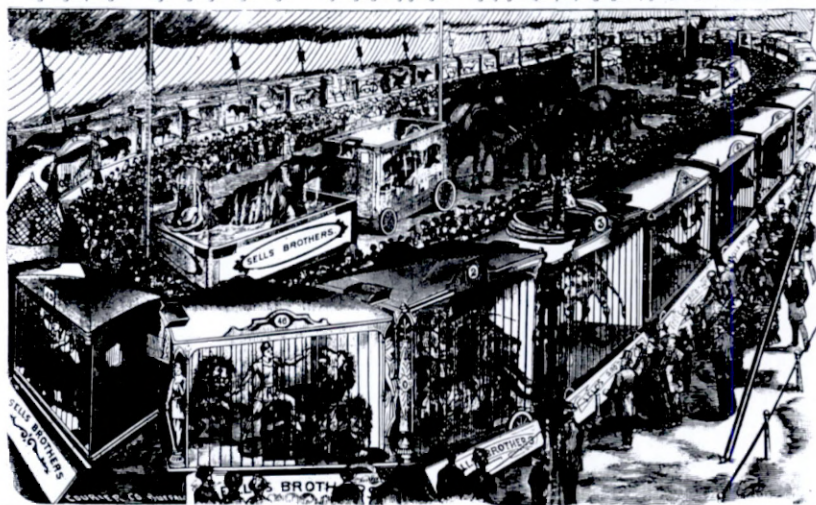
"Hunter's Circus and Menagerie will be at Leon on Monday, June 2nd. A free balloon ascension, and free wire ascension and a free street pageant, are some of the attractions advertised. Price of admission 35 cents only."

On June 5, the *Indicator* commented, "Quite a crowd in town last Monday. There were some very good actors with Hunter's show. The fellows who invested in soap, last

one of whom it will be noted was 13-year old Homer Hobson, the future equestrian star.

"Last Sunday was a day of excitement in this city occasioned by the poisoning of about twenty-five members of Hunter's Circus Company by drinking a decoction of stramonium or 'jimson' seed in lieu of coffee. It appears that some of their horses and mules were sick and stramonium seed was purchased for them; the original package being torn it was put into an empty coffee paper, and in the early morning, through mistake, the cook got hold of this paper and made 'coffee' of it. Some of the men and teams started for Leon immediately after breakfast; a half-hour or more afterwards, twelve or fifteen of those remaining in town fell into a comatose condition; physicians were summoned, inquiries made and the cause soon ascertained. Parties were immediately started out on the road to look after those who had left, and about half a dozen were found lying insensible within a distance of five miles from town, and were brought back for treatment. The services of all the physicians in town were brought into requisition, and with the assistance of

THE FIFTY-CAGE MENAGERIE!



The number one attraction of the 1884 Sells show was the 50 cage menagerie. This illustration appeared in one of the show's heralds that season. Pfening Archives.

Monday, were mostly of those who are notable to take their home paper. When one of them says he came out ahead--why ah--you can believe him if you are credulous enough."

The big news of the week appeared under the following headline:

"Jimson Seed Poisoning.

"Some fifteen of Hunter's circus troupe were badly poisoned at Augusta, last Sunday morning. Several of them arrived here in the morning in a terrible fix, but Dr. Carlille was called and soon had them on their feet, and we believe all of them took part in the performance here the next day.

"The way it happened. They had their own cook, who carelessly dumped a lot of jimson seed from a can, instead of ground coffee as he supposed, into the coffee pot in which there was already some coffee, and thus the mistake was not detected until the repast was over."

The *Southern Kansas Gazette*, Augusta, Thursday, June 5, reported the misfortune in more detail and named several of the victims,

a number of citizens, all of the victims were brought safely out of their critical condition. While everybody did all they could to relieve the suffering and save the lives of the unfortunates, we must give special credit to A. J. Reams, C. C. Vanwinter, Chas. Gollwicks and James Locke, who took charge of a thirteen-year-old boy early in the morning, and labored incessantly throughout the entire day until five o'clock in the evening, to save his life. They received the fervent congratulations of all the people for their persistent efforts in behalf of the little fellow, whose case excited the deepest sympathy of the entire community. The following are the names of those who, so far as we could learn, were cared for in this city. J. F. Jones, G. E. Bates, Walter Mack, J. F. James, Thos. Curtis, members of the band; Signor Harris, Homer Hobson--13 years old; Joe Tinkleman, Turner, Will Bryley, John Happ and Arthur Perry, performers; C. D. Hobson, Howard Hobson, David Briggs, Charlie Cook, Robert McCune and David Sagar, general utility men.

"We are proud to record the fact that the liveliest interest of all our citizens, without regard to class, calling or profession, was enlisted in behalf of these suffering men, the pastors of the several churches dismissing their congregations that their members might

engage in affording relief, and the pastors themselves taking an active part in the good work. Misfortune is a common leveler, and in calling forth our sympathies and efforts to relieve, teaches us that we belong to a common brotherhood."

Sells Brothers' Mammoth Fifty-Cage Menagerie and Great Four-Ring Circus, "in all its Superior Elegance, Limitless Proportions and Unquestioned Superiority," was seen in 1884, in the Kansas towns listed below: May 27, Atchison; August 30, Ft. Scott; September 1, Parsons; September 2, Burlington; September 3, Emporia; September 4, Clay Center; September 6, Minneapolis; September 8, McPherson; September 9, Salina; September 10, Wamego; September 11, Topeka; September 13, Marion; September 15, El Dorado; September 17, Hutchinson; September 22, Independence.

May of 1884, in Atchison, was an exciting time for the dedicated circus goer, with W. W. Cole, May 6th; John B. Doris, the 8th; Adam Forepaugh announced for an unrevealed future date; and Sells Brothers on the 27th. The Sells show joined the advertising melee late in April.

Sam Joseph opened the Atchison campaign and represented his show in an outstanding manner. Cole ran his last ad in the Atchison *Globe* on May 3, Saturday, and Joseph placed a highly polished handout side by side with Cole's advertisement, under a headline urging the public to

"WAIT FOR THE BIG SHOW.

Not until May 27th

Sells Brothers' Monster Fifty-Cage Menagerie and Great Four Ring Circus."

"This great show, which has for some time been announced as coming to Atchison, and whose date is now positively fixed for Tuesday, May 27th, is remarkable for something more than the enormous proportions which the venturesome consolidation of its great Amusement Organizations has given it, and that is for the confidence it displays in public appreciation, and the frank manner in which it insists upon a thorough investigation of the absolute truth of the many extraordinary announcements it makes. While it respectfully solicits and sincerely appreciates patronage, it does not beg a single undeserved favor from either the public or the press. To the former it denounces lying advertisements as an attempt to obtain money under false pretenses, which they should enforce the law to punish and prevent, and from the latter it asks only such reputation as the candid critic can conscientiously accord. Its proprietors are business men of character and responsibility, and we are glad to know their new departure in management is no longer an experiment, but a demonstrated

and immense success, which encourages them to greater effort in so excellent a work. Their further policy is that the rarest features, no matter how expensive, pay best, if printers' ink is only rightly used to bring them before the public, and hence it is that they have invested almost fabulous sums in the gorgeous free display of music, decoration and parade; in procuring the services of the greatest of artists known to the world, as equestrians, acrobats and athletes. No expense has



This courier booklet of the 1884 Sells show was printed in full color. Pfening Archives.

been spared in the securing of sensational features. It requires but a glance at their descriptive and pictorial bills to convince the most skeptical that the Sells Brothers are preeminently worthy of being placed in the front rank among the amusement managers of the world.

"The consolidation of their various amusement ventures enables them to present the only pair of full-grown White Nile Hippopotami, the only pair of Crested Camels, the only Snow-white Buffalo, and the only Auerochs or Bison Bonotus ever exhibited; also, the only pair of Wooly Elephants from the Malayan Archipelago, the only living specimen of the great Brazilian Taminoir, a herd of Amphitriton Lions, a Three-horned Senegambian Rhinoceros, a pair of Siberian Albino Bears, the only White Zebra, a pair of full-grown Geraffes (sic), and a veritable host of rare wild beasts and great performers besides, altogether more than enough to com-

plete what the press everywhere pronounces to be a genuine railroad World's Fair of Wonders, always presenting every attraction billed."

Of all the aspects of the circus, the handout is the least appreciated. A well written story should receive as much "applause" as a well conceived advertisement, and its creator should receive the honor due his talents. The handout quoted above in its entirety is a classic model of the press agents art, pompous, majestic, transmitting a feeling of awesome magnificence which is heightened by the snobbish failure to recognize any competition, much less the mention of W. W. Cole, and at the same time, when read aloud, it rolls across the tongue in a satisfying manner.

Although still early in the season, Sells Brothers had experienced its share of misfortune, if we can believe the *Globe*, which reported, Wednesday, May 7, that,

"The Sells circus seems to be very unfortunate this season. Some days ago Mr. Allen Sells received a letter from his brother Lew, in which he said it was raining at the time, and they had not had a dry day since starting out. At the third stand, Dayton, one of the clowns fell dead in the ring, but naturally enough most of the audience thought it part of his role. Last Sunday Miss Jennie Evers, who had been with the show some five years, died at Bristol, Tenn., of quinsy, aged twenty-four. She has a husband, also with the circus, but leaves no children."

On May 7 "the beautiful advertising car of Sells Bros. arrived in last evening. The car is much finer than any ever seen in the city before, with a single exception." Unfortunately, the *Globe* did not reveal the "exception."

The Sells brothers put together a strong performance for the season of 1884, headed by the great James Robinson. Other stars named in newspaper advertising were Senor Don Jeronimo Bell, the Great Spanish Four and Six Horse Rider; M'lle. Adelaide Cordona, the Intrepid Lady Four Horse Rider; Miss Pollie Lee, the only Living Lady Juggling Equestrienne; Miss Maggie Clair, the Wonderful Flying Woman; the beautiful Purvis Sisters; Mr. John Purvis; Mr. James Stow; Cardello and Austin; the Burton Athletes; Butler and Oakley; the Martinetti Family; Mr. Wm. Sells, and nearly 200 others. Of all the outstanding performers mentioned in the advertising there is only one name recognizable by the general public one hundred years later--Oakley. Annie Oakley and Frank Butler were barely mentioned in the small type toward the bottom of the page.

The show was without doubt what it claimed to be, "A Grand Autochthonic* Collection, being a Conglutinant Convocation Representing All Types of Manhood."

The menagerie was worthy of note, and was modestly delineated under the heading of "50 CAGES LIVING WILD ANIMALS 50." Included was "Emperor, the Giant Elephant," and another beast not in the menagerie of any competitor, "Nabob, the Coal-Black Sacred Elephant." Every show had a sacred elephant, but they were all white elephants, spotted elephants or albinos, but only Sells had "Nabob, the Coal-Black Sacred Elephant."

Other creatures advertised were "The Only Living 5-Ton 3-Horned Black Rhinoceros." There were "herds of giraffes, herds of Dromedaries, herds of Zebras, 12 teams of Elephants, and Camels in silk and silver harness, droves of Kangaroos, droves of Trained Kentucky Thoroughbreds, a World Wide Collection. Dens of Arabian Lions, dens of Polar Bears, dens of Wild Tigers, dens of Leopards, dens of Jaguars, dens of Hyenas, lairs of huge Serpents, lairs of Crocodiles, lairs of Alligators, hosts of Heaven Soaring Birds, flocks of Ostriches, whole clouds of Plumage, surpassing all collections since Ararat's foundation shook 'neath Noah's Heaven-Saved Host!"

Excursion trains were scheduled to run from Leavenworth, Oak Mills, Washington (about 125 miles on the Missouri Pacific) and Falls City, Nebraska (54 miles).

A large crowd was in town for the exhibitions on the 27th, but the *Globe* reported that despite the throng "there never was a more orderly circus day in Atchison."

The *Globe* did not publish a review but the editor did express a few of his opinions.

"The really great artist with the Sells show is the ticket seller, whose performance last evening was watched with a great deal of interest. With a great crowd before him, he puts out tickets and takes in money so rapidly that he seems to be working on a type writer. If a five dollar bill is handed up, the ticket seller takes it with one hand, and in an instant hands out a ticket and the necessary change with the other. Next to this man in greatness comes the leader of the band, whose men are trained to such perfection that their performance last night was almost equal to a symphony concert. The Sells circus is unusually large, and has more expensive features than the people care to look at; they get tired."

The day after the Sells visit Forepaugh's advance crew was busily hanging banners on Atchison walls, but still without a date.

Three months later Sells Brothers exhibited at Ft. Scott, August 30. The Ft. Scott *Weekly Monitor* failed to comment on the performances after the show had come and gone, but a handout printed before the coming contained a comparison of awesome magnificence.

"What Shakespeare is and will continue to be to the drama, the Sells Bros. are to the circus world. As he by his creative genius, his wonderful powers and his masterly mind

reached out and beyond all his predecessors, and made the stage the mirror of the world; put words of wisdom into the mouths of fools; gave to each man food for reflection,

DAYTON
SATURDAY, APRIL 19

Front page of a four page herald used by Sells in 1884. It was printed in blue. Pfening Archives.

and read the lives of princes and of pauper-struly so that 'he who runs may read,' his object was to hold the mirror up to nature; and so faithfully did he hold it up that his name will live forever, and gain fresh honor with time. So, too, when the Sells Bros. engaged in the great work of evolving from incipency the circus world, they leaped at once into fame, by the masterful manner in which they

wrought needed changes, and the wonderful innovations which they made upon the old 'saw-dust ring' with new ideas, and admirable originating talent, with energy, pluck and perseverance and marvelous ability to organize; with a thorough understanding of the wants of the public; rolling in wealth and prolific of ideas, and with superior business management and judgement to direct the expenditure of the one and the formulating of the other, their object: to make the circus the amusement of the people, combining pleasing entertainment with instruction, educating the mind, the eyes and the heart of the public, and sinking into the oblivion of the past the old time hum-drum concern dubbed circus for want of a fitting name, and they have succeeded, as we said before, until now it is a matter of fact, evident to all, and each day becoming more manifest, that the name of the firm 'Sells Bros.' will never die, but will continue to live on, Shakespeare-like, forever, and be more honored with time."

The author of the foregoing, once he conjured up Shakespeare, had trouble letting go, but he certainly found,

"----tongues in trees, books in running brooks,

"Sermons in stones and good in every-thing."

If his favorite tavern had closed earlier, perhaps, he would never have been entrapped by the Bard of Avon.

For the Parsons date, Monday, September 1, the *Sun* ran nearly a column of circus news after the show had moved on, including the following paragraphs:

"Last Monday was circus day, and the weather was all that Sells Brothers could have desired, from the break of day until the close of the performance at night.

"At an early hour people commenced coming in from the country in every direction, the early morning trains all brought in great numbers from neighboring towns, and by 10 o'clock the sidewalks along the line of the street parade were literally running over with people.

"The street parade was made promptly at 10 o'clock on Monday morning, and was a fine one, meeting fully every expectation.

"Both performances were well patronized, about 8,000 people being present in the afternoon and fully as many, if not more, in the evening.

"The show is good. There are fifty-one cages of animals and birds, and the crowd enjoyed looking at the blood-sweating hippopotami, the big elephant Emperor, the long-necked giraffe, and other occupants of the menagerie. One of the most attractive features, however, was the lioness and her baby cubs, the latter being but little larger than a cat, and as pretty as any pet.

"The ring and platform performances were exceedingly good. The veteran bareback rider James Robinson; Adelaide Cordona, the lady bareback and four-horse rider; Pauline

Lee, bareback rider; Mildred Gardner in her manege act, and the jockey act of Frank Gardner won well-deserved applause. The dog college under the management of White, was good, and the bicycle riding by the Stirk family was an exceedingly entertaining part of the exhibition. The part performed by the little girl, Miss Flora, was difficult, but well done. The contortion acts of the Donaldson brothers, the triple brothers; act of the Romalis brothers, and the mystic ladders by the Russian athletes were deserving of favorable comment. The music and the clowns in the circus are hardly what the regular attendant is accustomed to. The leading clown, John Purvis, did not get off jokes that were all old and worn by constant rubbing against the sawdust. There were other clowns, and the usual laugh went around the amphitheater. The four-horse act of Stowe was first class, but was fully equaled by the same act by Mlle. Cordona."

Under "Notes and Gossip," the *Sun* reported:

"Harry Evarts, press agent, made the *Sun* a pleasant call and we found him the right man in the right place."

"George Hines, press agent for the Doris show for the past three seasons, is now with Sells Brothers and was just as handsome and clever yesterday as ever."

"Allen E. Sells, son of the senior member of the firm, had sole charge of the great show here, his father (Ephraim) having been called home. Although a young man he handled things very successfully and clearly showed he was equal to the occasion."

"The pickpocket, who was caught in the act of robbing a lady during the circus procession on Monday, was fined \$50 in the police court yesterday, and not having that amount of money in his clothes he was returned to the calaboose. He gave his name as Charles Day."

One of the hazards of circus day was a runaway, always local horses frightened by the strange sounds and smells of the circus and the sight of the elephants.

The *Sun* reported that, "The team attached to Lewis & Lane's hack took fright at the show grounds in the afternoon and ran away. Two small boys were in the wagon at the time and were thrown out, but fortunately both escaped uninjured. The team was finally stopped in front of Dean & Bartlett's and marvelous to say no damage resulted."

Business was good in Kansas for the Sells show. At Clay Center on September 4,

10,000 attended; at Minneapolis on September 6, the show attracted 8,000.

The advance car arrived in Minneapolis August 18, and was inspected by a reporter from the *Messenger*.

"Sells Bros. beautiful advertising car was here on Monday," the *Messenger* reported on Thursday. "It is a daisy and was built to order. It is seventy feet long, has an elegant bed-room and 25 bunks. There are numerous shelves, cases for the advertising matter, which are full of the hand-bills, lithographs, streamers &c. John Reynolds has charge of

ters. Therefore, when Miles Orton brought his Anglo-American Circus within spitting distance of the great Sells Brothers show, they spat upon him.

Orton billed McPherson for August 21. Sells Brothers booked the town for September 8.

The McPherson *Freeman*, August 15, carried a two-column ad for the Anglo-American, but in an adjacent column, head-to-head with Orton's ad the Sells brothers ran a scurrilous listing of ten reasons the public should wait for the bigger show. While not mentioning Orton or his show by name, the Sells press department called Orton a liar, a thief, a braggart, and even reminded the Kansas readers that horse stealing was a hanging offence.

The ten reasons for waiting were listed as:

1. More solid capital investment.
2. Employs more agents abroad to find the wonders of the world.
3. Employs more artists at greater salaries.
4. Owns more railway cars than some railroads.
5. Conducts its business systematically and efficiently.

6. A large and splendid menagerie.
7. Only living pair of male and female hippopotami.
8. The only great four-ring circus in the world.
9. A show that can take pride in its history.

10. A show that has so far out-distanced its competition that it has become the criterion for judging the worth of all shows.

Despite the fact that the *Freeman* carried a full-page "WAIT" ad of the Sells show, the editor must have felt a twinge of embarrassment over the "Ten Reasons" story for the *Freeman* ran the following on the 15th:

"This paper is in no respect, responsible for nor does it endorse the Sells Bros. tirade against the 'Anglo-American Show,' it being simply the advertisement of a rival show, that comes later. The Sells has a good reputation, and we know the advance agent of the Anglo-American is a most gentlemanly appearing man."

In their full-page ad in the *Freeman*, the Sells Brothers warned the public about a nameless aggregation that was coming to McPherson soon.

"Do not be deceived by the small, mean, sneaking characterless concern advertised to appear before that day (the day of the Sells' exhibition). It is no circus. It is a Fly-by-night concern, consisting of a band of cut-



The Stirk Family of bicycle riders were in the 1884 Sells Bros. Circus performance. Pfening Archives.

this brigade with Ed Cake as assistant. We met these gentlemen in their car Monday morning, and found them very pleasant and clever. They are also advertising the Kansas State Fair, which is held at Topeka from Sept. 8-13."

Allen Sells, living in Topeka, took an active part in the management of the State Fair, being responsible for the grandstand entertainment, ticket sales and advertising. Lewis and Peter Sells both had thousands of dollars invested in Topeka real estate and were eager to see the city grow. A successful fair would help stimulate the growth, and growth meant dollars to the Sells brothers.

Sells Brothers' great 50-cage show had little to fear from the competition of other circuses since there were only four other shows operating in the middle-west capable of competing--W. W. Cole, Adam Forepaugh, John B. Doris, and the Barnum-London aggregation. As a matter of policy it was necessary to attack any show that exhibited in a town claimed by the Sells brothers. Size had nothing to do with it. Smaller shows had to be crushed to keep them from growing, and also to punish them for their effrontery in putting on airs in the presence of their bet-

purse and cut-throat freebooters. A band of predatory midnight prowlers. Whose advertisements are glaring falsehoods, and vile bare-faced mistatements, as far from the truth as the character of the managers who publish them are from honesty.

"We warn you against the small decrepit affair. It has just been driven out of Michigan, Illinois and Missouri by the strong arm of the law. Lock up your houses! Secure your Horses!! House your Cattle!!! Guard Your Females!!!! Let the Thieves, Fakirs, Monte Men, Cobblers and Blacklegs go as they come in the Night. Beware of them as of a pestilence. They advertise a world of Wonders. Lying advertising is a Crime. It is obtaining money under false pretense. And those who advertise falsely should be jailed.

"It advertises 100 cars, it has only 16; it advertises 4 advertising cars, it has none; it advertises herds of elephants, it has one little specimen of that animal; it advertises herds of giraffes, it has no giraffe; it advertises flocks of Ostriches, it has not got a feather of that remarkable bird; it advertises a Rhinoceros, it has no Rhinoceros; it advertises a big menagerie, it has no animals to make a menagerie; it advertises thousands of rare features, it has no feature worthy of note; in fact, it is a small, mean, miserly show, devoid of anything to interest or amuse the people. It has barefaced assurance and lives by Willful and Fraudulent misrepresentation."

On August 29, the *Freeman* reported that Orton's performances were "well patronized." So the Sells brothers' display of paranoia was to no avail and proved nothing more than their own pettiness.

The Sells' parade was the best ever seen in McPherson and the exhibition itself was attended by six to seven thousand in the afternoon and 2,500 at night. The quality of the performances was irreproachable and to the *Freeman* the proof was that "It was visited by ministers and church members of several denominations. They are all loud in its praise, and consider that their morals were not corrupted, and their standing as church members not lowered.

"The Sells Bros. are certainly the peer of all showmen in conducting a show free from all the elements of rowdiness, vulgarity and obsequy."

The *Wamego Reporter* commenting on the exhibitions of September 10, paid the Sells brothers the greatest compliment a showman could receive.

"But when we say that every one went home pleased, we say much more than was ever said of any show in this city before.

Sells Brothers are a success." Attendance was estimated between 5,000 and 6,000. One family came 40 miles in a wagon to see the great show.

The coming of the Sells show to Topeka was announced in the *Commonwealth*, May 8, but no date was mentioned. The story appeared the day before the exhibitions of John B. Doris and was intended as harassment. S. H. Joseph was one of the first agents on the scene, his presence being noted on July 3, by the *State Journal*.

When M. J. O'Neil arrived on July 26, with a carload of paper and a corps of bill posters the date was firmly announced to be September 11.



The Sells Bros. Circus used this lithograph to announce their 50 cage menagerie in 1884. Hertzberg Collection, San Antonio Public Library.

O'Neil was back in Topeka, August 16, accompanied by contracting agent G. B. McDonald. On August 22, O'Neil, George E. Stoneburner and L. Freeman checked into the Windsor hotel and the following day Advertising Car No. 1, accompanied by Peter Sells and under the direction of J. G. Reynolds, arrived in Topeka. The *Commonwealth* reported that, "A large corps of paste slingers soon transformed the city and surrounding country into a gallery of startlingly beautiful pictures and fancy colored show literature. The car is a marvel of beauty, and during the day was inspected by hundreds of people."

Advertising was the life blood of the circus and the Sells organization was not in the least anemic. Newspaper advertising began July 27, with ads in the *Commonwealth* and the *Capital*, each paper publishing five insertions, but the *Journal* harvested a bonanza with 20 repetitions.

The circus pitched its tents on the show ground between Fourth and Fifth streets

across from the Santa Fe depot and gave exhibitions at 10:30 a.m., 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. The city still claimed the Sells show as Topeka's own and the *Capital* on show day bestowed a home-town blessing on the Sells aggregation.

"It will be remembered by our readers that we have Sells great circus today. This is a sort of Topeka and Kansas institution. The proprietors are large and public spirited property holders in this city, and our citizens feel a pride in the splendid success which the Sells Brothers have won. They have been hard working, square, honorable business men and deserve the endorsement that the people of the entire country have placed

upon their amusement enterprise. Go to the great show and crowd the tent as an evidence of the good will Topeka and Kansas feels toward Sells Brothers."

The day after the exhibitions the *Capital* ran a review.

"It can be truthfully said of Sells Bros.' monster shows, that every promise of the managers has been faithfully fulfilled for every feature advertised by them appeared yesterday under their monster spread of canvas. The street parade in the morning by far eclipsed any show that has been here this season. Three entertainments were given yesterday and each one was well attended, at the afternoon entertainment the tent was over

crowded and there was hardly a vacant seat to be found. The fact that Sells Bros. have with them nearly all star actors, makes their show one of the largest and best shows on the road, and consequently a favorite everywhere."

At Marion for the exhibitions of September 13, the *Record* described the multitudes as "a regular fourth of July crowd. The throng on the streets to witness the grand street pageant in the morning was immense, and the parade itself a fine affair. We believe the show was in all respects all that it was advertised to be."

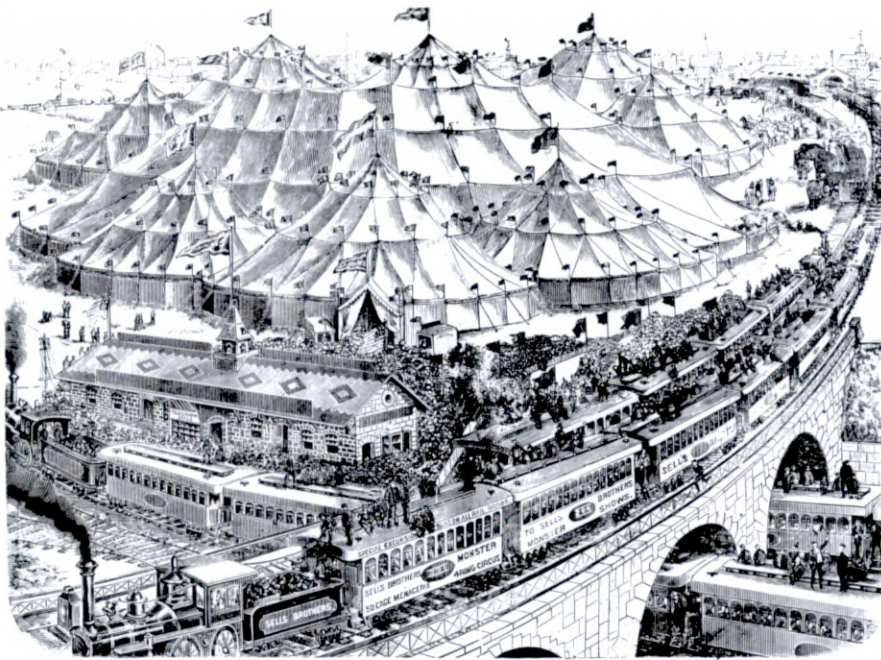
Sells Brothers won nothing but plaudits from the Kansas press even when things went awry, as reported by the *Independence Kansan*, concerning the performances in that city on September 22.

"The Circus.

"Sells Brothers' circus has come and gone. A great crowd came to see it. Four thousand people witnessed the performance on Monday afternoon. Owing to the rain, the evening performance was poorly attended. The afternoon performance was cut short by a wind and rain storm. The storm struck the great tent when the performance was about two-thirds concluded. As the wind grew

stronger the roof of the tent rose and fell in great waves with a noise like distant thunder. A good many people left the tent when the storm first came up, and as the wind increased, the crowd of people pushing their way out at the main entrance constantly grew larger. Presently a terrific gust of wind struck the vast sheet of canvass that formed the roof of the tent and with a sound like the discharge from a battery of artillery tore a great rent in it from eave to centerpole. The effect upon the vast concourse of people, most of whom

were women and children, was indescribable. With one wild shriek they rose from their seats and sought to escape from the monster tent that threatened every moment to fall upon them. Luckily most of them had the presence of mind to drop down between and under the seats and crawl out under the edges of the canvass. strange to say, no one was hurt. There is no question but the danger was very great; and had the great sea of canvass, with its heavy poles and weight of ropes and pulleys fallen on the people, a



The cutline appearing under this illustration from a Sells 1884 courier read: "A correct bird's eye view showing the tents of the great show, arrival of excursion trains, which bring thousands of people daily to see the only big 50 cage menagerie and great four ring circus." Pfening Archives.

number would have been killed. The menagerie is the finest collection ever shown in Kansas. The circus, taken as a whole, is first

class. The people connected with the establishment appear to be respectable ladies and gentlemen. Nothing in their deportment would lead one to think that they belonged to the dissolute and criminal classes that usually follow circuses. We heard of two or three cases of pocketpicking and one attempted swindle. A ticket seller in the wagon furthest from the main entrance attempted to swindle a farmer out of five dollars in making change. The farmer stuck to the swindler till he restored it. Had the weather been fair, the show would have been a complete success."

The *Kansas*, in a different column, stated,

"Sells Brothers are the most liberal advertisers that ever came through this part of Kansas. Almost every paper in the county got something from them in the shape of an advertisement of their recent exhibition in this place."

* A corruption of autochthonic, meaning, native to the soil, aboriginal, indigenous.

Research funded by grants from: Wolfe's Camera Shops, Inc., Topeka, Kansas and First National Bank of Kansas, Topeka.

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The Rensselaer Park

Showgrounds in Troy, New York

By Gene Baxter

Rensselaer Park, located in the Lansingburgh section of Troy, New York, was the center of attraction for amusement loving residents, young and old, from the turn of the century until 1918. With its roller coaster, a large merry-go-round housed in its own building, a picnic grove and boasting a large midway it was a popular place to visit.

The park extended along Fifth Ave. from 108th St. to 110th St. East from Fifth Ave. it extended for three city blocks and was bounded along the east side by the Boston and Maine railroad tracks. A small wayside station along the tracks made a handy stopping point for rail excursions coming to the park from the out lying rural areas. The tracks at Ingalls Ave., just a few blocks south, made a convenient unloading spot for the circuses coming to the park. Oldtimers often recalled the Buffalo Bill Wild West unloading at the Ingalls Ave. crossing. A block or two farther south the Ringling show and Barnum and Bailey, needing a larger area to unload, used the yards adjacent to Hoosick St.

Next to the park, between 106th and 107th Streets, was the circus grounds. On May 29, 1903 when Ringling appeared there, the feature was billed as "The Sublime Spectacle--Jerusalem." The following day the show moved across the Hudson River to Albany, and that weekend Ringling made the longest run of the season, over 300 miles, to Montreal to begin a Canadian tour.

Among the attractions on the Rensselaer Park midway was the Ferari's Wild Animal arena which used a hand carved showfront very similar to that used by Barnum & Bailey a few years later. The Ferari show was set up on the midway for several weeks during the park's summer season. Along the eastern side of the park was a large horse racing track which drew large crowds to the park on week ends.

The park closed down in 1918 and along with it the adjacent show grounds. In the early 1920's Ringling-Barnum appeared across the river at North Albany and from that point onward the big show was billed locally as showing at the Albany-Troy lot at Menands, New York. Big Bertha never returned to the old Troy show grounds again.

Troy, Lansingburgh, N.Y. One Day Only, Wednesday, May 30

THE ROLL OF HONOR
BUFFALO BILL'S
WILD WEST
 AND COMRADES OF ROUGH RIDERS OF THE WORLD

IT IS GENUINE

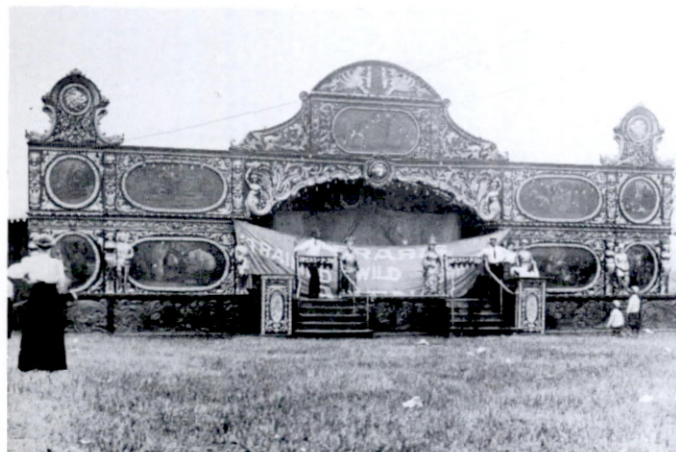
ROOSEVELT'S ROUGH RIDERS
 United States Regular Cavalrymen
 The World's Mounted Warriors

THE CHARGE UP SAN JUAN HILL

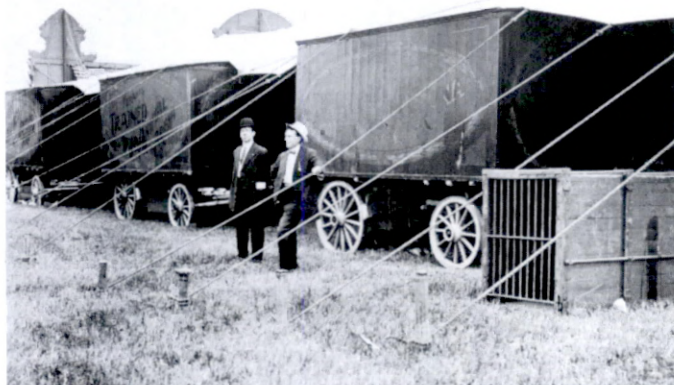
More Complete Than Ever

THE GRAND STREET CAVALCADE AND REVIEW OF THE ROUGH RIDERS

Many old timers of the area recalled making long lasting friendships with Buffalo Bill as he was invited to many homes nearby the show grounds for dinner. All illustrations are from the Gene Baxter collection.



The Ferari Trained Wild Animal Arena with its elaborate hand carved show front is shown on the midway of Troy's Rensselaer Park, about 1909. A rare view from a long gone era.



Prop wagons of the Ferari Wild Animal show lined up along side the shows one main tent. The top of the bannerline can be seen at left atop the wagons. The wagons are of European construction.



The Barnum & Bailey Egypt wagon heads along River St. through downtown Troy, New York in this early 1900s scene. It was a long ride from the North Troy lot to the Lansingburgh section of the city.



One of the smaller attractions along the Rensselaer Park midway. The midway was located in midst of a grove of shade trees making it an ideal spot to visit on a hot mid-summer day.

BILL KASISKA'S LETTERHEADS



In 1904 Col. Francis Ferari called his show the Great Anglo-American Trained Animal Exposition. This oversized letterhead was used that year. It is printed in blue. The address was listed as National Printing, Chicago.

Circus Life and Adventure of Adam Bardy



Adam Bardy's new, revised book now includes 166 pages of interesting reading, as he tells of his life with the circus and of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus tent fire during the summer of 1944, when the big top went up in flames. Adam vividly describes the very start of this devastating fire which took the lives of more than 100 people on a summer day in Hartford, Conn. on July 6, 1944.

Also included in this book is the story of Adam's years of circus life, followed by his life as a bootlegger that started in the Kentucky mountains. Adam describes the State Police raid, when he escaped and spent the next seven years as a fugitive. He tells of his "boxing days" while traveling with the Coleman Bros. carnival in the 1930s, as well as his life with the gypsies, where he learned the art of fortune telling. Many more fascinating experiences of Adam Bardy's life round out this volume.

For those that like to remember the good old days, here is a book full of interesting reading. Adam Bardy's true story of wonderful years gone by.

This nationally advertised book is now for sale at \$12.95 per copy, sent by first class mail. (For overseas orders include \$3.50 extra for air mail postage.)

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